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AUGUST 2010



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features

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Water and City

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The view of Xianshui Rock

There Exists A Millennium Place in China!

—the Taoist Holy Place in China the World Geopark Dragon and Tiger Mountain in Jiangxi



仿古崖墓吊装



Taoist Temple

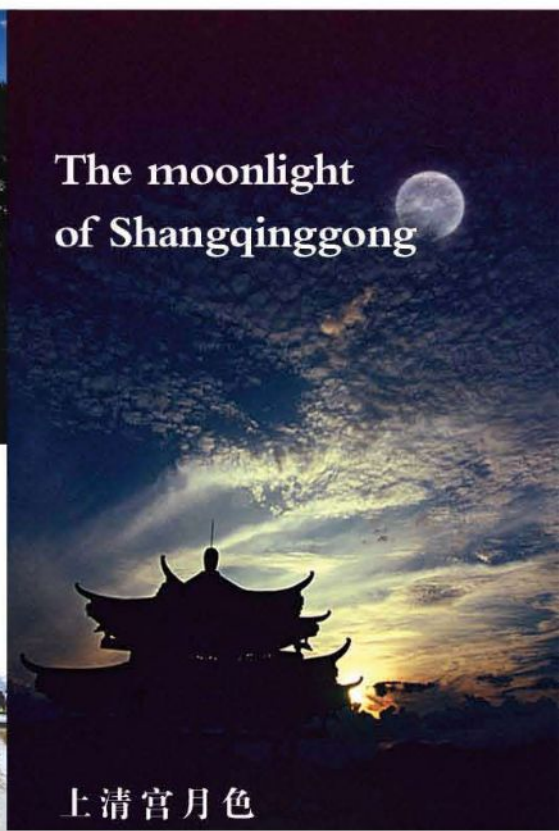
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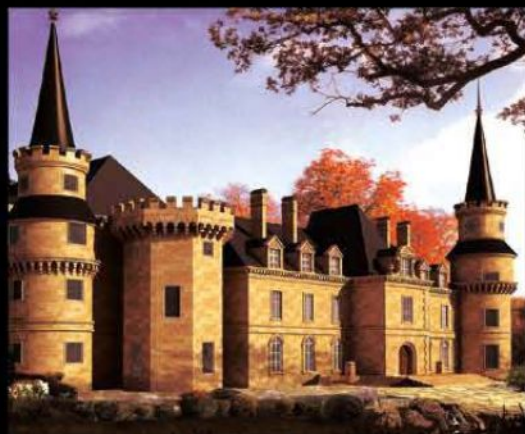
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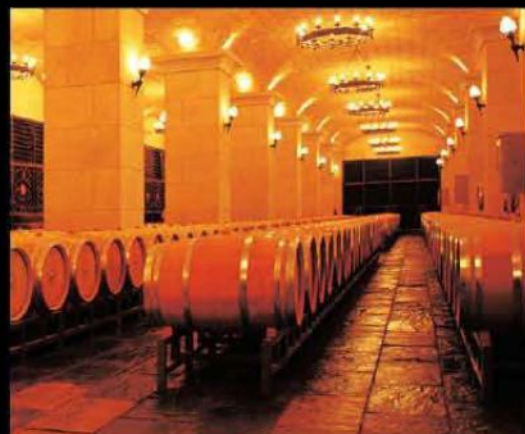
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CHINA PICTORIAL

AUGUST 2010

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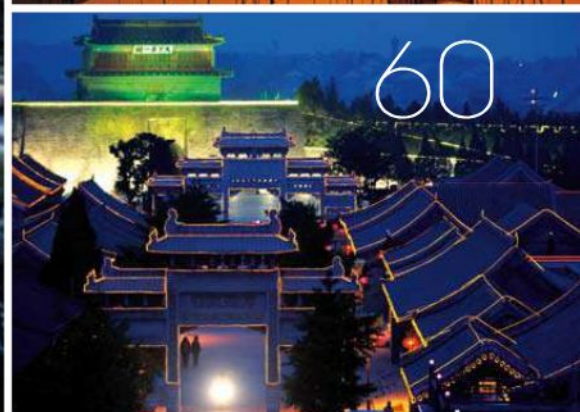
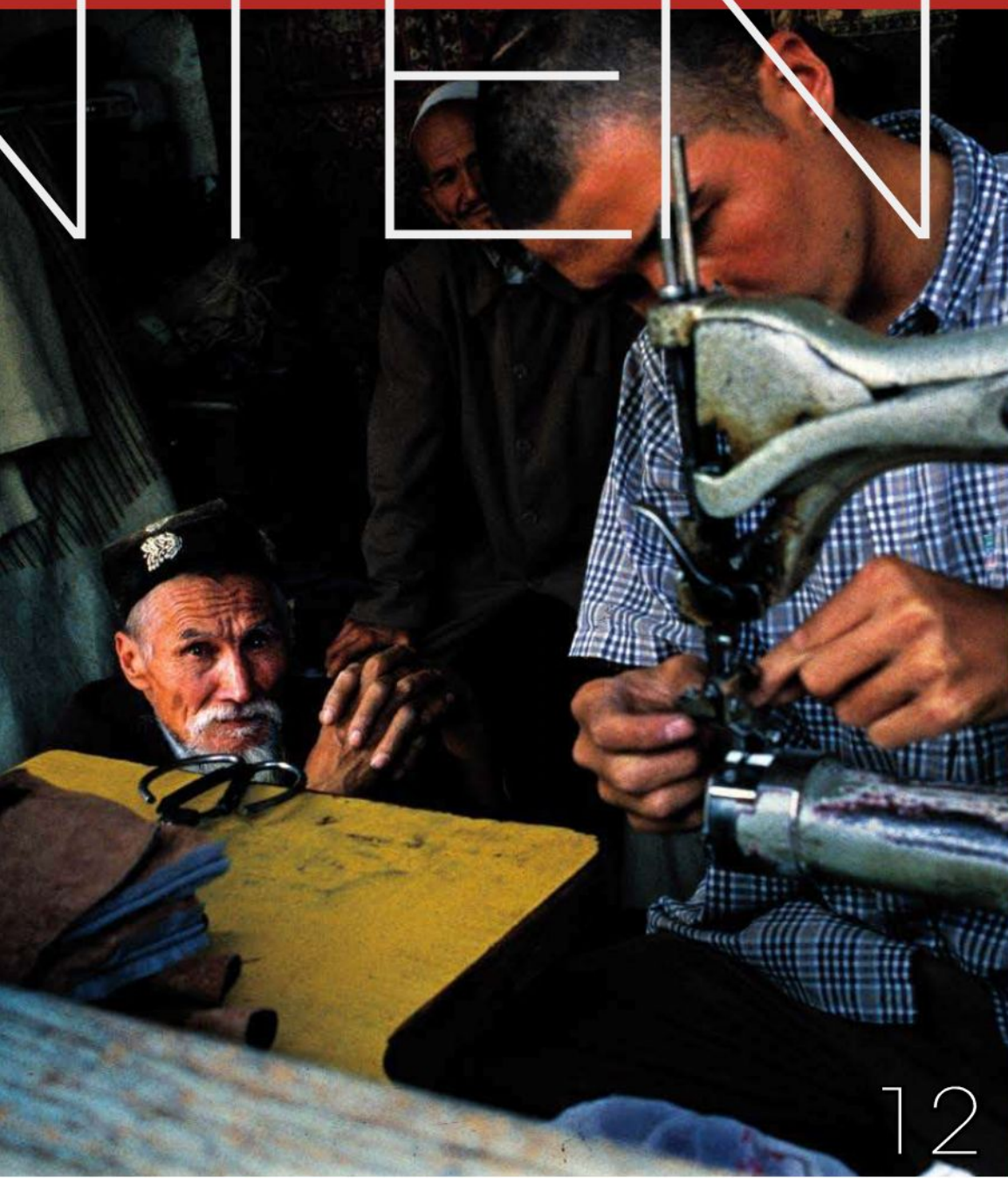
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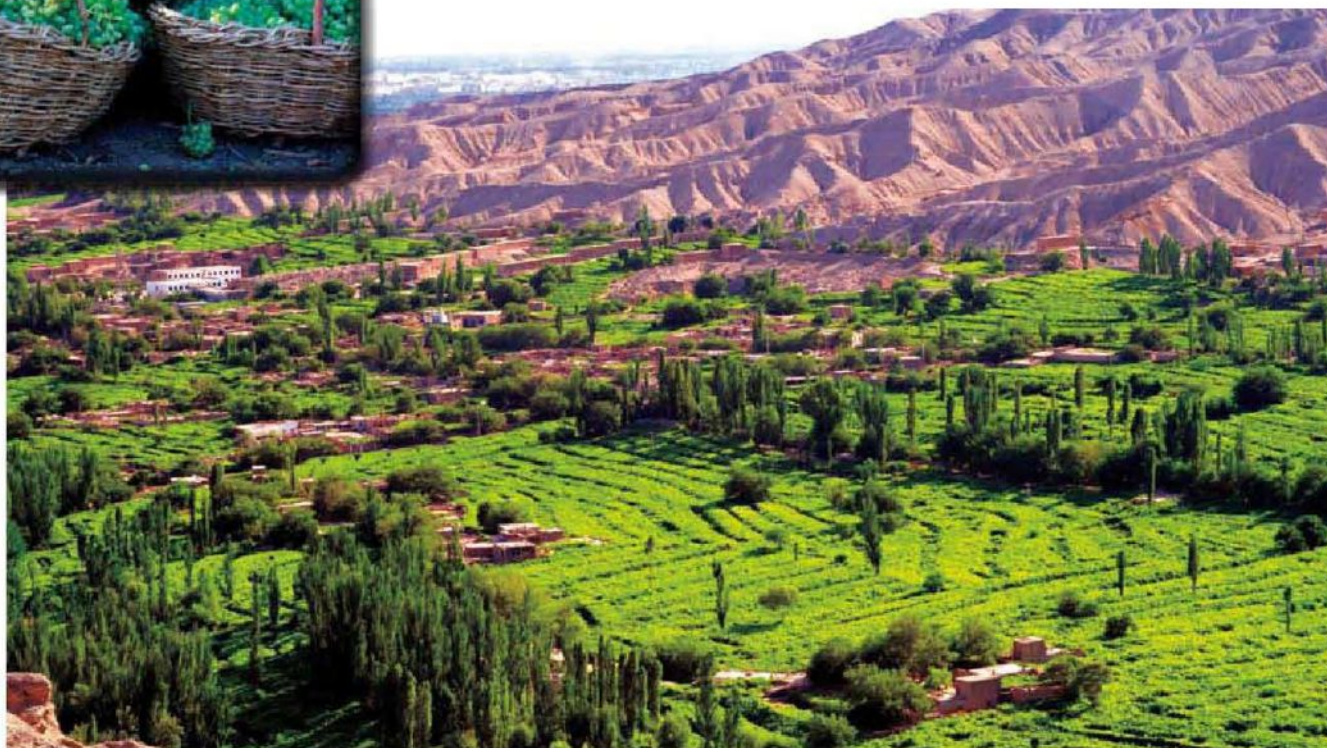




Grape harvest, Turpan. CFP



Overlooking Grape Valley. CFP



CHINA PICTORIAL

Travel Destination
of the Month

Juicy Grapes

August is generally the hottest month of the year and for this reason, most travel magazines will recommend cooler summer resorts for their readers to find relaxation. However, *China Pictorial* breaks convention to introduce the not-so-cool Turpan City in Xinjiang.

In August, the city is filled with the sweet fragrance of locally-grown fruit, which attracts visitors just as much as the pristine landscapes. The Turpan Basin boasts advantageous geography for fruit growing, and is well-known as the home of melons thanks to the sharp temperature differences between day and night. The month of August is the prime time for grapes, and Grape Valley is just 10 kilometers away from downtown Turpan. The valley enjoys a milder climate than the city and can be the perfect cooling-off getaway. It runs eight kilometers long, and boasts labyrinthine intertwined grape vines. Tourists can try picking their own grapes, or touring local wineries. There is also the annual Turpan Grape Gala which is generally held in late August as the most celebrated local festival.

➤ Charming Wetland

Recently, the Third Qilihai Cultural Festival kicked off in Tianjin, with “charming Ninghe, green homeland” as its theme. Altogether 70 activities are to be held during the event to showcase the history of the ancient county of Ninghe. The festival will last until September 30.

Working to protect Qilihai Wetland’s natural resources and biodiversity, Ninghe is now preparing to build a wetland ecological resort, a science education center, and a training office which will place emphasis on aquatic and cultural elements.

➤ Welcome to Shichahai

Beijing Shichahai Tourism Festival opened on June 19 at Xidan Cultural Plaza, and will last until end of August. Since early June, Xicheng District has held the “Enjoying Gourmet Food, Watching the World Cup” event at various food streets, including those in the Shichahai bar area and Xidan, in order to prepare for the festival.

Free coupons with a total worth of 18 million yuan are being handed out to the public, including movie tickets, shopping vouchers, tickets for Beijing tourist attractions, and pub discount coupons for the Shichahai area.

➤ Summer Railway Transport

The two-month summer railway transport season started this year on July 1. Like previous years, tourists and students will account for a large number of the passengers during the 62-day peak season.

Because of the ongoing Shanghai Expo, passenger flow volume to Shanghai has risen steadily. Some newly constructed high-speed railway lines, including Wuhan-Guangzhou, Zhengzhou-Xi’an, and Beijing-Tianjin, have increased travel convenience.

➤ Cruising into the Mainland

Hong Kong, a world shipping center as well as a renowned cruise destination, is trying to introduce cruising to Chinese mainland, inspired by the increase of mainland travelers to the city.

On June 28, China’s National Tourism Administration and Hong Kong Tourism Board held the 2010 Cruise Tourism Symposium in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. Representatives from Hong Kong cruise tour industry and heads of tourism administrations from 12 provinces on Chinese mainland participated in the conference.

➤ Beijing International Tourism Expo

Beijing International Tourism Expo & North China Travel Fair 2010 (BITE & NCTF 2010) concluded on June 29 at the China International Exhibition Center in

Beijing. The 3-day event attracted 30,000 professionals and 100,000 interested participants. Business contracts worth up to 2.9 billion yuan were signed during BITE.

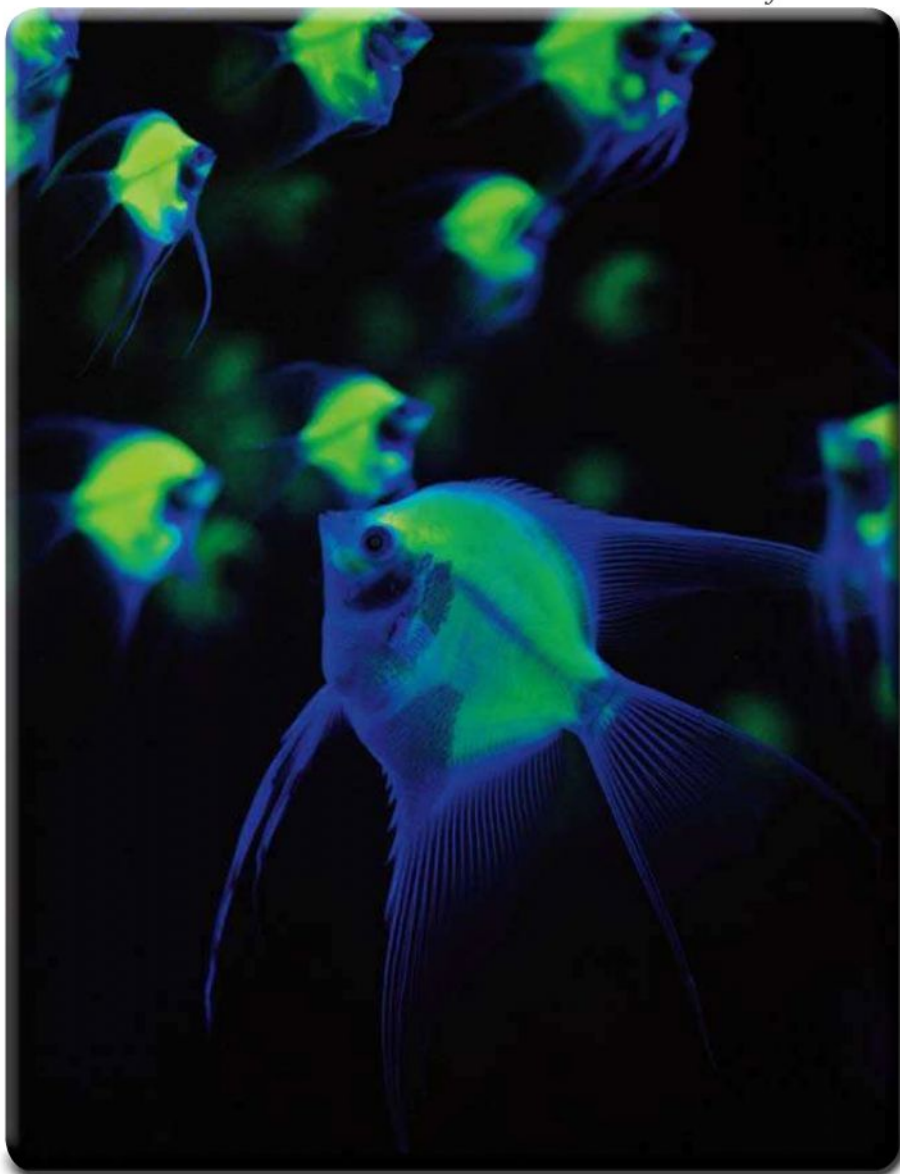
796 exhibitors from 82 countries and regions participated in the event. Organized by the Beijing Tourism Administration, BITE and NCTF combined to build a platform for communication between industry professionals, buyers, and travelers.

➤ Fluorescent Fish

A new generation of fluorescent fish is set to light up people’s homes by next year. The fish were developed in Taiwan and are bigger than previous breeds. Researchers estimate that once these fish successfully hit the market, their annual output value will reach over NT\$ 2 billion in the next few years.

According to the press conference introducing the new breed, genetic modification technology was utilized, heralding a major biotech breakthrough for Taiwan’s agricultural industry.

A group of fluorescent angelfish swim in a tank during the press conference. IC





Posing with Spider-Man. IC

➤ Shanghai Animation & Comics Museum

The Shanghai Animation & Comics Museum opened to visitors on June 29 at Shanghai Cartoon Valley in Zhangjiang Hi-tech Park.

The three-story museum offers interactive exhibits where visitors can design short animation, from the first drawings to putting graphic stills in motion on state-of-the-art computers. The first floor houses a 7,000-piece collection of priceless cartoon stills and life-size models of animation icons from films such as *Avatar* and *Transformers*. The third floor has a 3D movie theater so that guests can view their in-house designs on the big-screen. Opening day attracted more than 1,000 cartoon fans.

➤ Cigarette Pack Bugatti

Recently, five Chinese college students managed to build a fully-functional Bugatti Veyron out of 10,280 empty cigarette packs.

The incredible project began when the five Xi'an Electrical Mechanical University students decided to do something to help their fellow students quit smoking. Their creation weighs around 300 kilograms, and apart from the steel frame, engine, break system and gearbox, it is all made out of empty cigarette boxes.

Going for a test drive in a luxury car made of cigarette packs. IC



Crazy for the World Cup

China failed to qualify for this summer's World Cup in South Africa, but that didn't stop Chinese fans from celebrating the biggest sporting event on the planet.

World Cup fever was easy to detect at Shanghai Expo Park. Many visitors watched the tournament's opening ceremony there. The opening match was displayed on a big screen installed on the exterior wall of the Brazil Pavilion, as well as on LED screens at the Argentina Pavilion.

Many fans chose to watch World Cup games with friends at pubs around the country. Some pubs featured special offers of "barbecue, beer and World Cup" to attract fans. In Shanghai, some youngsters even decorated their nails with the national flags of China and the countries participating in the 2010 World Cup.



World Cup flags. IC

Stock Slump

China's stock market dropped sharply on June 29, driving the benchmark index to the lowest level in 14 months.

The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index shed 4.27 percent to end at 2,427.05 points. The Shenzhen Stock Exchange plunged 503.15 points to close at 9508.91. Aggregate turnover for the two markets was 134.72 billion yuan.

The Agricultural Bank of China is set to raise up to US\$23.2 billion in the world's largest IPO, according to a price range the lender has set for its shares.



An investor looks at share prices on an electronic board at a stock exchange in Hefei, Anhui Province. Xinhua

Scorching Heat Lingers

China's weather forecasters announced in early July that the unbearable heat searing much of the country would continue for a few more days.

Sweltering hot weather, with temperatures over 35 degrees Celsius, could be expected in at least 13 provinces and regions across China in the coming days, the National Meteorological Center said.

In Beijing, the local meteorological bureau upgraded the heat alert on July 4 from blue to yellow, only two steps below the top alert. 



A monkey enjoys a shower in a zoo in Anhui. IC

At dawn on June 25, Luozhen Town of Fuzhou was suddenly transformed into a vast lake, with many of the single-story houses submerged up to their roofs.

A Flood of Emotions

Text and photographs by Shepherd C. Zhou

Luozhen Town was badly affected by the flood.



Each summer, China's southern regions are afflicted by severe flooding. But people's attitudes towards such natural disasters are complex: While some retreat in panic, the majority choose to stay, holding firm to the belief that while floodwater may carry away their home and their possessions, it will never move their determination to construct a new life for themselves.

Staying Home

At the end of last June, a dike burst in Linchuan District, Fuzhou, Jiangxi Province, causing havoc for more than 100,000 people in an area covering 70 square kilometers. The flood swept through fields and villages, and was three meters at its deepest point. In such circumstances, it would be no surprise to see masses of refugees fleeing for drier ground. But in Fuzhou, things were different.

Luozhen and Changkai were the most badly affected towns in Fuzhou, with all the villages in the area besieged

by torrential water. Despite this, most of the villagers were reluctant to leave, when relief workers told them it was wise to do so, and even after some of their homes had been divided into two parts: In the lower portion, their furniture, kitchenware, and domestic animals were submerged in water; while above the second floor, villagers struggled against hunger and the constant annoyance of mosquitoes and bugs. But they banded together and supported each other, praying that the floodwaters would subside quickly so that they could begin the arduous task of rebuilding their lives.

In Zhouan Village, Zhang Jinming and his wife actually moved their four home-bred pigs from the pen on the first floor to safety on the second. The water had arrived so fast: Two minutes after the dike burst in Changkai, a mere two kilometers away, their hometown of Zhouan was beneath a giant lake. "I couldn't leave because I was so concerned about my home appliances, furniture, poultry and livestock," Zhang explained. "Fortunately, the government offered relief." Like many of their neighbors, the Zhang couple sent their parents and child to urban areas and moved everything that they could carry to the second floor, where they stayed to keep watch over family belongings.

Because the flood cut off the electricity and water supply, households began stockpiling bottled mineral water, instant noodles, and candles. Along with government support, villagers tried to improve the situation through their own efforts. Hu Pingchu, a 60-year-old villager in Luozhen, didn't flinch when the floodwaters struck his home. He simply carried on with his business — peddling vegetables on the street. Hu grew the vegetables himself, and refused to take advantage of local suffering by raising prices.

Returning Home

As the weather improved, the water level in the stricken areas dropped significantly, encouraging those who had left to return to fix their damaged residences.

In Zhangjia Village, Luozhen Town, households began disposing of the silt deposited in the houses and drying furniture and clothes in the sun. Relief workers, in camouflage uniforms, remained behind to help clear the damage and the garbage. The village's cement road, about 1,000 meters long and four meters wide, was quickly rid of obstructions. The fields began to take on their original appearance, crisscrossed by footpaths. But the seedlings of cereal crops were suffocated in a thick brown sludge.

In Luozhen Town, because neighborhoods are located at different altitudes, residents were allowed to return home at different times. But, since the water level had dropped to lower than one meter, many who could not wait simply rolled up their trousers and waded through to get back to their ordinary life.

It proved difficult. The damage caused by the flood was devastating. Business establishments, including electrical appliance shops, supermarkets, and restaurants, had all been soaked for several days. According to one

furnishings shop owner, her losses totaled 10,000 yuan, equivalent to half a year's turnover. Very few villagers had property insurance. Nonetheless, they displayed remarkable optimism. "Life should move on. As long as we're doing well, money can be earned back sooner or later," one resident said.

Around noon, kitchen smoke swirled from the chimneys, carrying with it the fragrance of cooking. Life began to approach something normal once more.

A Luozhen villager tries to exit his home by rowing a boat.



A child seated in an inflatable boat pushed by his father.



When the flood began to recede, some farmers could not wait to return.

In Zhouran Village, soldiers engaged in disaster relief rescue stranded villagers.



Flood victims have dinner at a resettlement on the campus of the East China Institute of Technology in urban Fuzhou



Where the Heart Is

For those who chose to stay when the flood hit, it was a dangerous undertaking, since waters could swell at any time. House foundations were likely not solid enough to resist the water for very long; food and drinking supplies provided by the government were far from sufficient; and there was the threat of being bitten by poisonous snakes which sought sanctuary on house roofs and in trees. Despite these dangers, some residents chose to remain with their homes, ignoring the pleas of relief workers. "All we could do was try our best to make sure they were supplied with water and food," one worker said.

The incident attests to sentimental relationship most Chinese people attach to their native land. The German thinker Count Hermann Keyserling once wrote of Chinese people a century ago in his book *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, "There is no other peasantry in the world which gives such an impression of absolute genuineness and of belonging so much to the soil." Even floodwaters can't change that. 

The relief effort.





At Luozen Town Central Primary School, 11-year-old Hu Zhenyun (left) and 12-year-old Wan Zhibin (right) at a class break.

Relief workers endeavor to re-pair the breached dike of Changkai Town.





NEW HORIZONS

"A good traveler has no fixed plans, and is not intent on arriving."

— Lao Tzu

For some, just mentioning the word "Xinjiang" conjures up images of the snow-capped Tianshan Mountains, boundless verdant grasslands, the juicy grapes of Turpan, the bustling bazaars of Kashgar, and the forbidding Taklamakan Desert extending beyond the horizon. For millennia, people of various ethnic groups, including the Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Hui, and Han, have embraced the frontier soil, developing a diverse range of ethnic culture. Alongside the amazingly distinctive geological landscapes, the diversity and exotic nature entice numerous tourists to explore this complex region.

In recent years, the economic growth of Xinjiang has driven the development of tourism in the region, making it an important sector which in turn boosts the economy in other sectors. Statistics show that in 2009 Xinjiang yielded a gross income of 18.6 billion yuan in tourism, with tourists totaling 21.33 million, including 354,900

foreigners. According to the region's long-term plan, by 2015, Xinjiang's total income for tourism is expected to reach 70 billion yuan, at an annual growth rate of 20 percent.

From May 17-19, 2010, a central work conference on Xinjiang's development was held in Beijing, instituting strategies for promoting "leapfrog" development and securing long-lasting peace in the region. Shao Qiwei, director of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), revealed that presently, and in the years to come, the CNTA will give top priority to supporting Xinjiang to realize its tourism goals. Efforts will be made to improve infrastructure in major tourist areas, build Nalati, Turpan, and Kashgar into state-class tourist resorts, create a gold travel route based on the Ancient Silk Road, and further the construction of a regional tourism system, so as to promote tourism as the cornerstone of Xinjiang's economic growth.

*An Islamic ritual in the
square of the Id Kah Mosque
in Kashgar. by Qiu Lei*



Developing the Frontier through Tourism

— An Interview with Professor Wang Qiyao

Text by Tan Xingyu



A recent central work conference on Xinjiang's development aimed to help foster new opportunities for the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and tourism gained much attention as a key resource in quickening progress in Xinjiang. Both officials and the general public have been debating Xinjiang's greatest tourism strengths and the appropriate direction to aim developmental strategies. *China Pictorial* took such enigmatic concerns to Professor Wang Qiyao, a specialist in tourism planning and director of the Leisure Economic Research Center of Renmin

University in Beijing.

CP: Not long ago, the central government of China enacted new policies to stimulate Xinjiang's development, which will certainly hasten the maturity of its tourism industry. A goal of dramatic development of Xinjiang's tourism industry by 2015 has been set. What do you see for the future of Xinjiang's tourism?

Prof. Wang: Xinjiang is blessed with a great amount of natural tourism potential compared to other places in China. The region is a popular travel destination that features its own distinct flavor in both nature and culture, being tucked in the westernmost part of China. Even deserts can be transformed into first-rate tourist attractions.

At present, Xinjiang's tourism industry has remained relatively untouched. Some might see this as a weakness that will require huge investments and a lengthy period of time to grow, but in the long run, it is an advantage for a new industry to be well-planned from its inception. Now, with the help of the tremendous support from the central government, Xinjiang is provided with a rare opportunity. I believe that the region has a promising future ahead.

CP: What measures do you think Xinjiang should take for strategic development of tourism?

Prof. Wang: As I said, Xinjiang's freshness in tourism is an advantage which shouldn't be ignored. Lessons learned from planned development in other parts of the country should be remembered – when lack of scientific planning for sustainable development resulted in great losses of social wealth and little return on investments. In the early stages, which Xinjiang is experiencing, the government should provide guidance to allow private enterprises to compete in a rational manner, so as to eventually improve local livelihoods through tourism.

CP: Xinjiang is in a border area inhabited by a variety of ethnic minorities, and some are already concerned that developing its tourism will impact unique local lifestyles – that an influx of tourists would upset the natural balance, adding more pressure on the area to increase its capacity to accommodate visitors. Do you agree?

Prof. Wang: I don't think so. Capacity for accommodating tourists will grow along with the improvement of infrastructure and the development of tourism. Recently, we have realized that exchanges between Xinjiang and the rest of the country were far from enough, and that alone is a good reason to develop tourism, which I believe to be one of the best methods of cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding.

CP: Do you have any specific suggestions for Xinjiang's tourism development?

Prof. Wang: I've visited Xinjiang many times to study its tourism potential in particular. I think the following steps should be made:

First, the area needs improved infrastructure, including airports, highways, and hotels.

Second, measures need to be taken to improve tourist services and better train those managing and working in the sector.

Third, the tourism industry network needs improvement. With all enterprises working together, development will increase by leaps and bounds.

And finally, promotion and marketing endeavors need to take full advantage of Xinjiang's geographical location. The region is neighbor to several Central Asian countries, and simple measures such as creating a multi-language tourism website would be a good start. But priority still needs to be placed on upgrading their services, which will help Xinjiang catch up with other parts of the country and the rest of the world.

SILK ROAD OASIS

Text by Liu Haile

*The Ancient City of
Gaochang, by Qiu Lei*

On the morning of July 9, 2010, a Boeing 737 descended through the clouds and landed at Turpan Jiaohe Airport. This was the first commercial flight ever to land at the new airport, which is notable for its lowest-altitude runways in China. Now, travelers have a more convenient way to reach Turpan, a famous tourist destination in northwestern China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

Turpan is best known for its Grape Valley thriving with fruits, mysterious ruins, underground canals that rival the magnificence of the Great Wall, the Flaming Mountain famous for scorching weather, and boundless deserts. Along with timeless Uygur cultural elements, the land has a high concentration of tourist attractions, making it a must-see destination in the autonomous region.

Turpan means "land of fertility" in Uygur language, and was an important town along the ancient Silk Road. As early as the Han (206 BC-AD 220) and Tang (618-907) dynasties, the local culture was already attracting the interest of passing camel caravans. The area's ancient civilizations have gradually waned over the centuries, but plentiful cultural relics remain as a reminder of the ancient town's past glory. Of the historic ruins, the most famous are Emin Minaret, Astana Tombs, and Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves which are considered a "treasure house of Buddhist culture and art."

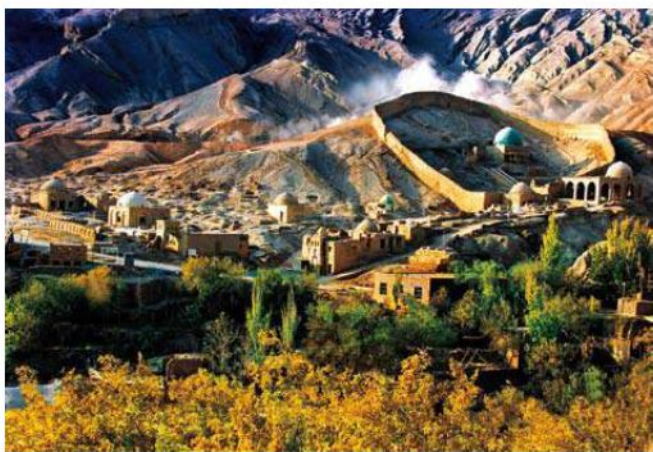
Home of the Grape

An old Xinjiang saying goes that "Turpan is famous for grapes, Hami for melons, and Korla pears are widely praised."

The famous Grape Valley is hidden deep in the Flaming Mountain, 13 kilometers northeast of Turpan's city proper. Snow from the nearby Tianshan Mountains melts into man-made canals to irrigate more than 400 hectares of vineyards in the valley. When summer ends, the grapevines paint the hillsides green, while cabins used to air-dry grapes make neat rows in the shade. Turpan's climate is arid and sunny, which gives local grapes high sugar content. Along with the grapevines, the orchards are dotted with other fruit trees yielding peaches, apricots, pears, pomegranates, figs and mulberries. In July and August, when most areas of Turpan, especially the aptly-named Flaming Mountain, are sweltering in heat, Grape Valley remains pleasantly cool.

Grape Valley is classified as a National 5A Scenic Resort and attracts plentiful visitors every year, but Yu Qingming, director of the Administrative Committee of Grape Valley, is not yet satisfied. "Our ultimate goal is to build a world-renowned grape expo," he explains. Each August, Turpan holds a grape festival that features several grape-themed performances and wine tastings. Al-

Mazar Village, a holy land for Muslims in Xinjiang. CFP



The Karez irrigation system functions like an underground canal. by Qiu Lei

ready, the festival lures considerable flocks of tourists and merchants from around the world each year.

Turpan has long been dubbed “land of fire” due to its dry, scorching climate. Still, it is lucky enough to include many vast oases. The juxtaposing areas of greenery were created by more than a thousand underground tunnels, known as Karez, which form a massive irrigation system. Along with the Great Wall and the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, the Karez irrigation system is considered one of China’s three greatest construction projects of ancient times. At its peak, the Karez irrigation system extended more than 5,000 kilometers, earning it the nickname “underground Grand Canal.” Although the majority of the tunnels are under Turpan, they extend to the nearby cities of Hami and Helei. The Karez system draws water from underground rivers for both irrigation and drinking. Existing Karez tunnels were mostly constructed during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), and are still used to irrigate local oases to this day.

Islamic Sanctum in Valley

In Tuyu Valley in Turpan’s Shanshan County is the old, tranquil village of Mazar, where traditional Uygur lifestyles have been well preserved. Today, locals still wear ethnic attire and travel with the help of donkey carts. Such villages are common across Xinjiang, but this one is unique as a holy land for Muslims.

Soon after entering through the valley’s south entrance, visitors will encounter Hojam Mazar, a 1,300-year-old religious site commonly known as the “Tomb of Saints.” Its story goes that in the early seventh century,



The Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves are considered a “treasure house of Buddhist culture and art” in Turpan. by Qiu Lei



Travel Tips

How to Get There

Turpan is 180 kilometers from Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang. Tourists can reach Urumqi by air or train, and then travel to Turpan by bus in two hours. On Saturday, there is a commercial flight from Urumqi to Turpan. Tourists may also take a train directly to Daheyan Town, which is 50 kilometers from the city proper of Turpan. From the railway station, there are regular buses to urban Turpan, and taking a taxi costs about 80 yuan.

Visitors can rent a donkey cart to travel through urban bazaars and the suburbs. Commonly called "donkey taxis" amongst locals, the carts enable visitors to authentically experience the local lifestyle.

When to Visit

The best season to visit Turpan is from July to September, when local fruits are all ripe. However, summer days are extremely hot. A local saying holds that the sunshine is so intense that one can "cook eggs in sand and pancakes on the wall." However, the temperature can drop drastically at night, so tourists are advised to bring a variety of clothing options.

What to See

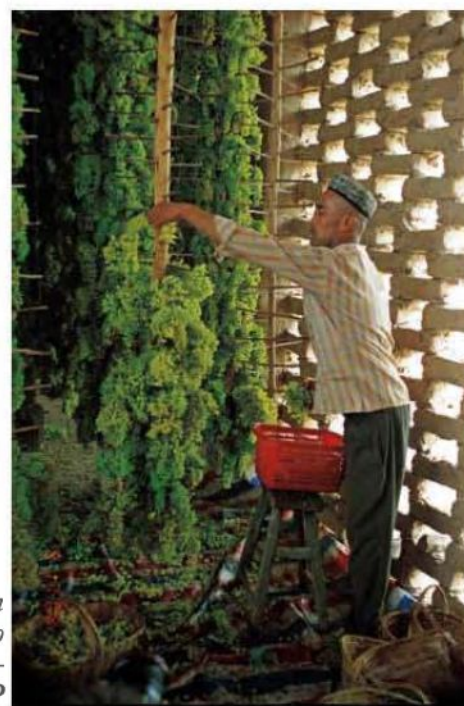
The most famous tourist attractions in Turpan include the Ancient City of Jiaohe, the Ancient City of Gaochang, Astana Tombs, Flaming Mountain, Grape Valley, Emin Minaret, Aydingkol Lake, Kumtag Desert, and Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves.

an Islamic missionary and his five disciples traveled from Yemen to the Tuyu Valley, where they settled to spread Islam with the help of a local shepherd. The shepherd became China's first Islamic believer. When the missionaries and the shepherd died, locals buried their bodies in a cave, which became Hojam Mazar.

According to the historic notes from German explorer Albert von Le Coq, a large number of Muslims from faraway places such as Turkey, India and other countries were making pilgrimages there in the early 20th century. The site still receives plentiful pilgrims from all over China every year. 

The Flaming Mountain in the sun. by Qiu Lei

Typically, Turpan people air-dry grapes to retain as much nutrition as possible. CFP



In the Mongolian language, "Nalati" means "place where the sun emerges." Legend has it that during Genghis Khan's western expedition, a legion of Mongolian troops which was advancing from the deep Tianshan Mountains to Ili became plagued by hunger and chilling temperatures brought by high-altitude winds on the snowy mountain. When they finally reached the apex of the mountain, the soldiers were surprised to see a vast prairie below them, sated with blooming flowers, bubbling springs, and crystal clear streams. Suddenly, the clouds parted and the sun emerged, inspiring shouts of "Nalati!" from the soldiers, and the name stuck.

Nalati Grassland averages 1,800 meters above sea level as a typical sub-alpine meadow located at the eastern end of the Ili River Valley in the heart of the Tianshan Mountains. Towering above it amongst the clouds is

the perpetually snow-covered Kabanbayi Peak, and just below is the torrential Gongnaisi River, twisting through the mountain valley like a dynamic blue ribbon. Nalati is often hidden in the clouds, so it is nicknamed "air grassland."

Nalati has been famous since ancient times for its weaving rivers, wide valleys, precipitous peaks, and lush forests. Its colors peak in June, when a rainbow of wildflowers bloom to adorn the seemingly endless sea of green grass, and herds of cattle and sheep arrive to graze amongst simple nomadic dwellings (yurts). Smoke swirls from the yurts as locals cook, curling into the clouds and mist blanketing the mountains. During this prime season, herders hold various cultural and sporting events in the meadows, infused with Kazak ethnic folk customs. At the annual horseracing pageant, visitors can cheer at tradi-

LITTLE YURTS ON THE PRAIRIE

The grassland is blooming with wild poppies. by Chen Jian



tional competitions including not only horseracing but also sheep catching, girl chasing, and wrestling, while the Kazak people serenade the audience with their unique Aken ballads. Some tourists are even lucky enough to witness a local horseback wedding.

Nalati Grassland is home to 10 percent of the Kazak people in China. Well-preserved traditional Kazak culture, combined with the breathtaking landscapes and diverse folk customs make this destination a popular tourist spot. The white yurts dotting the green mountainsides and riverbanks serve as homes to Kazak herders, who have inhabited the grassland for thousands of years. Although the grassland has evolved into a tourist resort, Kazak nomadic customs still prevail. All Kazak homes, for example, still raise falcons. When tourists drop by, the bird will pose for photography, but remains a more practical pet as an assistant to hunters scouting for foxes and rabbits. In April 2005, Nalati Grassland was named by Shanghai Great World DSJNS as the "grassland with the largest Kazak population in China."

Another popular Nalati attraction is its youthful horsemen. Kazak boys should begin learning to ride a horse at the age of four or five, a custom that has produced many young equestrian experts. The boys even ride horses to school, and in their spare time often teach tourists the basics. Visitors to Nalati can't help but burn rolls

of film when seeing the memorable images of young riders galloping across the prairie with a whip in hand.

In winter, Nalati transforms into a world of silver white, and becomes host to various ice and snow sports. Hamst Ski Resort features a 3-km cross-country course—a rarity in Xinjiang, a 1.5-km alpine run, and two mid-level runs (800 m and 600 m), that together can accommodate 400 skiers at a time. Winter visitors can also enjoy viewing snow sculptures crafted for a local competition, and will often be invited as guests into herders' homes. When fierce winds sweep across the vast grassland, kicking up waves of snow, the spectacle is an unparalleled treat.

After Nalati was listed as one of China's six most beautiful grasslands in October 2005, months later, its scenic area was rated Grade AAAA by the National Tourism Administration. Herders are amongst the scenic area's 2,000 employees, spread across some 290 scenic spots, which are able to receive up to 6,000 tourists daily. Kazak herders have enjoyed the fruits of the tourism industry not only in better income and lifestyle, but also in its ability to preserve their ethnic nomadic culture through increasing demand to showcase it. And in July of this year, the Nalati Tourist Airport began operation, further developing the area's tourism capabilities by increasing convenience for those wishing to fly straight to the grassland from Urumqi.

Nalati Grassland is most beautiful from June to September. by Qiu Lei

Travel Tips:

Transportation:

Nalati Grassland is accessible by several highways, including those that connect it to Urumqi (460km) or Yining (340km). Now, daily flights from Urumqi make visiting easier than ever before.

Accommodation:

Nalati visitors are recommended to stay at Kazak-style inns, which range from 100 to 300 yuan per night, and offer samples of Kazak ethnic milk tea, cheese, butter, kumiss, bacon, boiled lamb, roasted whole lamb, mutton kebab, and other grassland cuisine.

Scenic attractions:

Nalati Scenic Area is comprised of an alpine meadow sightseeing zone, a Kazak folk customs zone, and a leisure resort. Additionally, the scenic area offers four hiking trails, enabling tourists to better experience the natural beauty and ethnic customs during a one-to-four-day visit.

A STROLL THROUGH KASHGAR

*Text by Wang Lei
photographs by Su Li*

Before visiting, everything I knew about Kashgar in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region I learned from a few books and photos. I was most moved by one picture in particular, in which a group of seemingly rural men lined up for the photo in front of Id Kah Mosque.

In the Uygur language, Kashgar means “place of jade.” Tucked in the westernmost tip of China, the city is over two millennia old, and was once a key stop along the ancient Silk Road. From the time of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – A.D. 24) all the way up to the early Qing (1644-1911), Kashgar was a regional political, economic, cultural, military, and religious hub. Some say that one can never experience “real” Xinjiang without visiting Kashgar and breathing in its unique and mysterious architecture, bazaars, relics, ruins, and handicrafts. I wanted a taste of the real Xinjiang, so I went to Kashgar.

When walking down the street, I already felt immersed in strong Xinjiang flavor. The first thing I saw was that advertisements were in both Uygur and Chinese languages. Although I couldn’t understand conversations I overheard along the way, I still enjoyed feeling the rhythm and charm of their speech. Shops and mills lining the old-fashioned street filled the air with their busy noises

A photograph of a woman in a market setting. She is wearing a vibrant, patterned headscarf with floral motifs in red, orange, and yellow. A large, dark brown, ribbed shawl is draped over her head and shoulders, partially obscuring her face. She is also wearing a dark, patterned top and a pearl necklace. The background is filled with colorful fabrics and market stalls.

*A female peddler
in the Kashgar
market.*

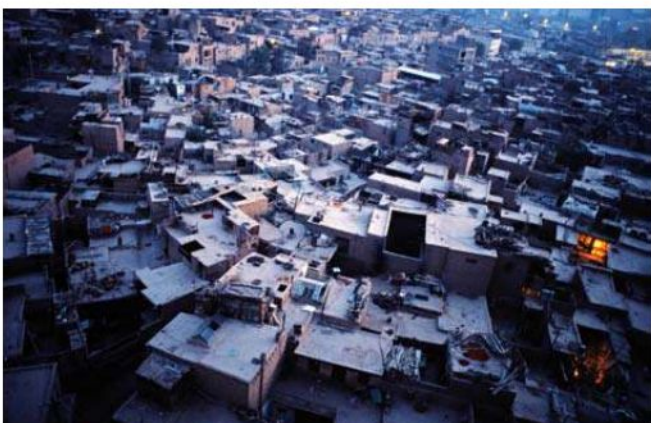
as smoke rising from vendors slinging roasted mutton kebabs delivered the aroma to passersby. Amidst the eateries were shops offering a wide variety of local handicrafts of jade, bronze, and wooden wares. It was particularly fascinating to watch Uygur artisans at work, carefully crafting traditional musical instruments.

During my stay, I was frequently told to visit the ancient township of Gaotai, where people still live in dried-brick dwellings from the Middle Ages. There, the arrangement of houses was dictated by the terrain, and the lanes were linked with narrow alleys. I could have gotten lost in the intricate maze, if not for frequently passing small mosques, whose domed roofs towered over the rest of the houses to help guide my way.

It was not uncommon to pass elderly people relaxing in the gateways and nodding off. The locals were warm and hospitable. Kids ran around barefoot, and whenever they spotted a camera, their eyes would light up as they flock to the visitor to say “hello.” They would pose in front of the camera and insist on a group photo before running away in giggly exuberance.

I later learned that in 2006, Kashgar was used as a shooting location for scenes taking place in Kabul, Afghanistan, for the film *The Kite Runner*. It was chosen for

The old district of Kashgar.



A Uyghur elder looks into the mirror.



its remarkable visual resemblance to the Afghani capital.

At the center of Kashgar is the square of Id Kah Mosque. The structure sits in the northwestern corner of the square, and represents the largest mosque not only in Xinjiang, but in all of China. During major religious festivals, it generally attracts up to 30,000 Islam devotees.

As an important trading city linking China to Central and West Asia for centuries, Kashgar has been famous for its Grand Bazaar, which is the largest comprehensive market in Xinjiang. The Grand Bazaar, also known as the Central & West Asia International Trade Fair, is located along the eastern bank of the Tuman River, near downtown Kashgar. There, almost any commodity imaginable can be found, such as textiles, clothing, daily necessities, handicrafts, furs, dried fruit, lumber, and second-hand goods.

Although the city lacks many modern amenities, the residents of Kashgar seem content with the things they have: their mosques, favorite foods, bustling bazaars, and most importantly their families and friends. 

A local tailor and his apprentice.





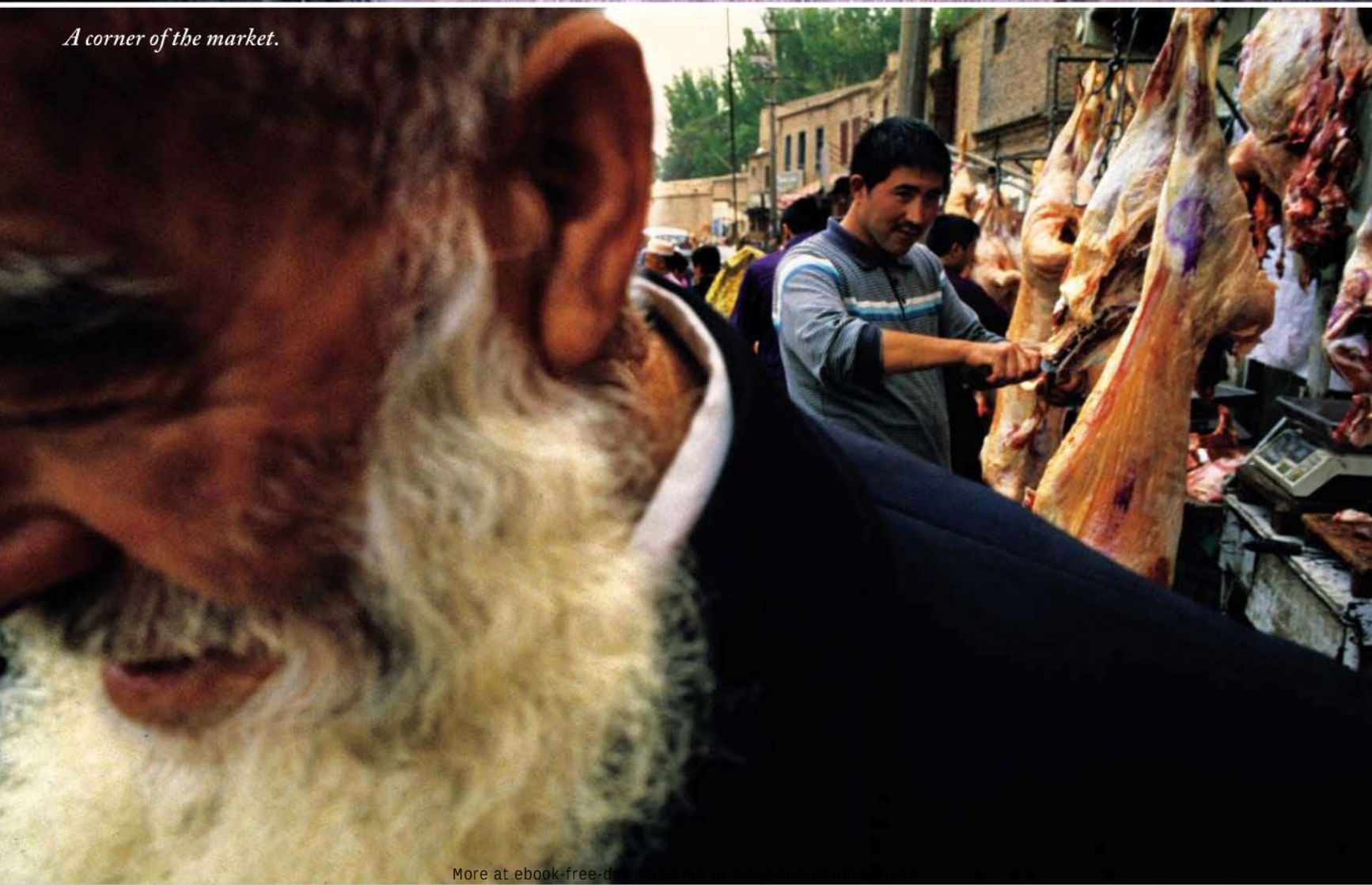
Shoppers in the market.



Sheep dealers.



A happy family.



A corner of the market.

Kashgar is a city full of vivid colors.



Travel Tips

Transportation: Regular daily flights link Kashgar to Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Also, trains run every other day between the two cities.

Shopping: Merchants offer a wide variety of handicrafts featuring strong ethnic flavor. Favorite souvenirs include rugs, Yengisar knives, Aidelaisi silk, caps, printed fabric, pottery, ornaments, and local musical instruments. Trying local produce is highly recommended, such as guava, almonds, figs, grapes, and melons. Reminder: If you are not happy with the price when haggling, put your right hand to your left chest and bow while saying "no, thanks."



*A mother
and her son.*

A Gem of Art

Text by Tan Xingyu



Artist Angélique Shidi. by Zhou Lei

While visitors to the China Pavilion at the World Expo Shanghai are free to roam around the exhibition areas on three stories, just above them there is another “secret” floor which is not open to the public, and instead functions as space for receiving VIP guests, hosting meetings, and displaying special exhibits. This floor is laid out following a traditional Chinese *Jiugong* (nine-lattice) pattern, with its nine halls devoted to different themes. The highlight of the lobby is an impressive watercolor painting, 10 meters wide by 5 meters tall, entitled *Celestial Water Carrying No Boundary – World Continents Sharing One Origin*. This masterpiece features three dominant colors, created by mixing paint with water taken from different parts of the world: The rosy part adopts the snow water of the first winter after the 2008 Beijing Olympics; the azure blue “sky” comes from the early 2009 winter snow from the Alps; and the bright orange “rivers” are formed by Shanghai’s snow on the eve of the 2010 Chinese New Year.

“When I first came to the construction site of the China Pavilion, I came up with the idea of creating a painting with water from different locales,” the artist, Ms. Angélique Shidi, explains. “It is not a publicity gimmick. I feel that waters from different places have different traits, which can adapt to different colors and express different emotions.” In her view, watercolor painting is an ideal approach because of its ability to blend and absorb. “My paper and pigments were all imported from Britain. I believe top-quality materials are vital for a high class creation.”

Shidi did not major in painting, but instead learned gemology. After several years of studying in the United States, she graduated in 2004 with diplomas certifying her as an Accredited Jewelry Professional and Graduate Gemologist from the Gemological Institute of America. Her creation for World Expo Shanghai incorporates her knowledge of precious stones. “I mixed the snow water from different places with gem microlites from five continents,” she says. “The gems are metallic, and according to traditional Chinese *wu xing* [Five Elements - a system of five phases used to describe interactions and relationships between phenomena], metal feeds the water, and water nourishes all living things, so that the snow water and the gem microlites are combined to create something beauti-



Shidi and her masterwork, Celestial Water Carrying No Boundary – World Continents Sharing One Origin. This set of paintings were selected to be displayed at the China Pavilion of World Expo 2010 Shanghai. by Zhou Lei

ful and organic.”

The study of gems inspired Shidi to search for beauty in everything. “Each gem has a life,” she says. “They were all formed after millions of years of geological movement. So when I study precious stones, I try to get a sense of the great beauty contained inside as well. Both their color and their form have provided great inspiration for my artistic creations.”

The texture of gems can also be seen in Shidi’s paintings: The color layers are as thin as gauze, but the strokes are acute, and the changing hues brought about by the randomness of creation are evocative of the veins of a deep gem mine.

Although Shidi has never studied at a regular academy of art, she was fortunate to fall under the tutelage of several masters, who taught her not just painting skills but also how to have confidence in herself. “I love painting,” she exclaims. “It brings me happiness and delight, and has no commandments or restrictions. I always feel like I have left a part of me on the canvas.” Shidi always rises at dawn to pursue her passion, rushing to her studio to get an idea on paper, often even forgetting to change out of her pajamas.

Some critics view Shidi’s “nonprofessional” status as an advantage. Fan Di’an, an art critic and director of the National Art Museum of China, once pointed out that those who excel in painting but do not take it as a vocation are traditionally admired and respected in China. They have a certain authenticity, unburdened by the factors of fame and profit, and instead are able to pursue art



Shidi is creating a new painting at her studio. by Zhou Lei

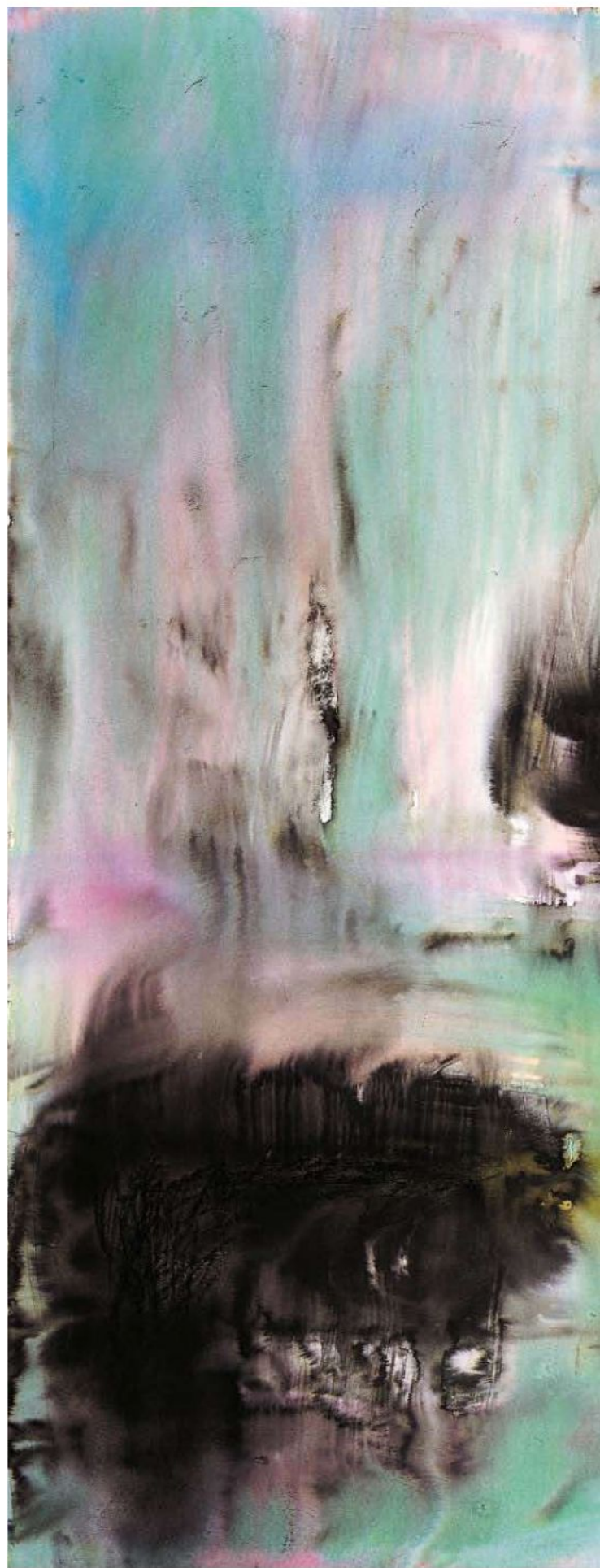
Shidi talks about her art. by Zhou Lei



simply for art's sake.

Shidi has traveled to many countries and visited numerous art museums in North America and Europe in order to broaden her artistic horizons. She likes to talk with philosophers and discuss metaphysical problems, and such free-flowing conversations often inspire her creations. After viewing Shidi's paintings, Zhai Zhenming, Professor of Philosophy at Sun Yat-sen University, praised the complexity of her work: "The inherent vagueness of Angélique Shidi's artistic language could put you in a state of ambivalence and indecision. You can jump into or escape from it, but there is no way you can ignore or disregard it. Angélique Shidi's naivety and innocence would lead you to see what you have been hiding from yourself, and the fading area of your mental world could be vitalized by Shidi's unbounded freedom witnessed in the strokes and veins of her work."

While Shidi threw herself into the world of art, paying little attention to the public's appraisals of her paintings, many began to suggest she was a real talent to watch. Since 2003, Shidi has held solo exhibitions both home and abroad, and many of her paintings have been collected by various organizations. In 2005, one of her exhibitions became the first cultural event to be held at the China Art Center in Paris, and her ink-and-wash painting *Flooding Strokes - 5* was presented by the Chinese government to the then French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin as a gift. Earlier this year, she donated a three-piece set to the World Expo Shanghai, and it was selected to be displayed at the China Pavilion. But all of this fame, and no doubt fortune which followed, has not gone to her head. "I'm just doing what I like to do," she announces. 





The Trace of Tide - 4, watercolor painting, 150 x 100mm



Sound from the Heaven - 2, watercolor painting



2008 Jubilance - 1, watercolor painting, 200 x 150mm

Castles and Clams, Beaches and Beer

Text and photographs by Lin Dihuan

The coastal city of Qingdao is ripe for romance, fueled by its sandy beaches, quaint streets, and deep blue seawater. Because of its seaside location, the city enjoys a year-round mild marine climate. For most of the month of July, while inland cities are sweltering in heat, Qingdao remains relatively cool. It's no wonder the city has long been a favorite summer resort in China.



Stroll Through the Past

Liang Shiqiu, a noted 20th century Chinese writer, developed a deep love for Qingdao when he spent a couple of years there teaching and writing. He wrote of the city in many essays, one of which describes the city as “embraced by ocean in three directions, with red-tiled buildings hidden under the shade of thriving trees. The climate is pleasant, the landscape picturesque, and more importantly, the people are hospitable. At first sight, I could already tell the city was a suitable location to live – both in terms of climate and geography and with respect to community relations. Although a native of Beijing, I never considered the capital an ideal abode. I have traveled to a dozen provinces, from Liaoning in the north to Guangdong in the south, but the place that has impressed me most is Qingdao...”

Soon after its port was opened for trade, Qingdao witnessed rapid development, especially in manufacturing and shipping, and became the economic hub of the eastern province of Shandong. In the first half of the 20th century, many celebrated scholars flocked to live there, leaving behind a bounty of historic relics.

An examination of relics should start with a stroll along Zhongshan Road, a commercial street in the old urban district. From afar, one can see the spires of St. Michael's Cathedral, which is the largest existing Gothic

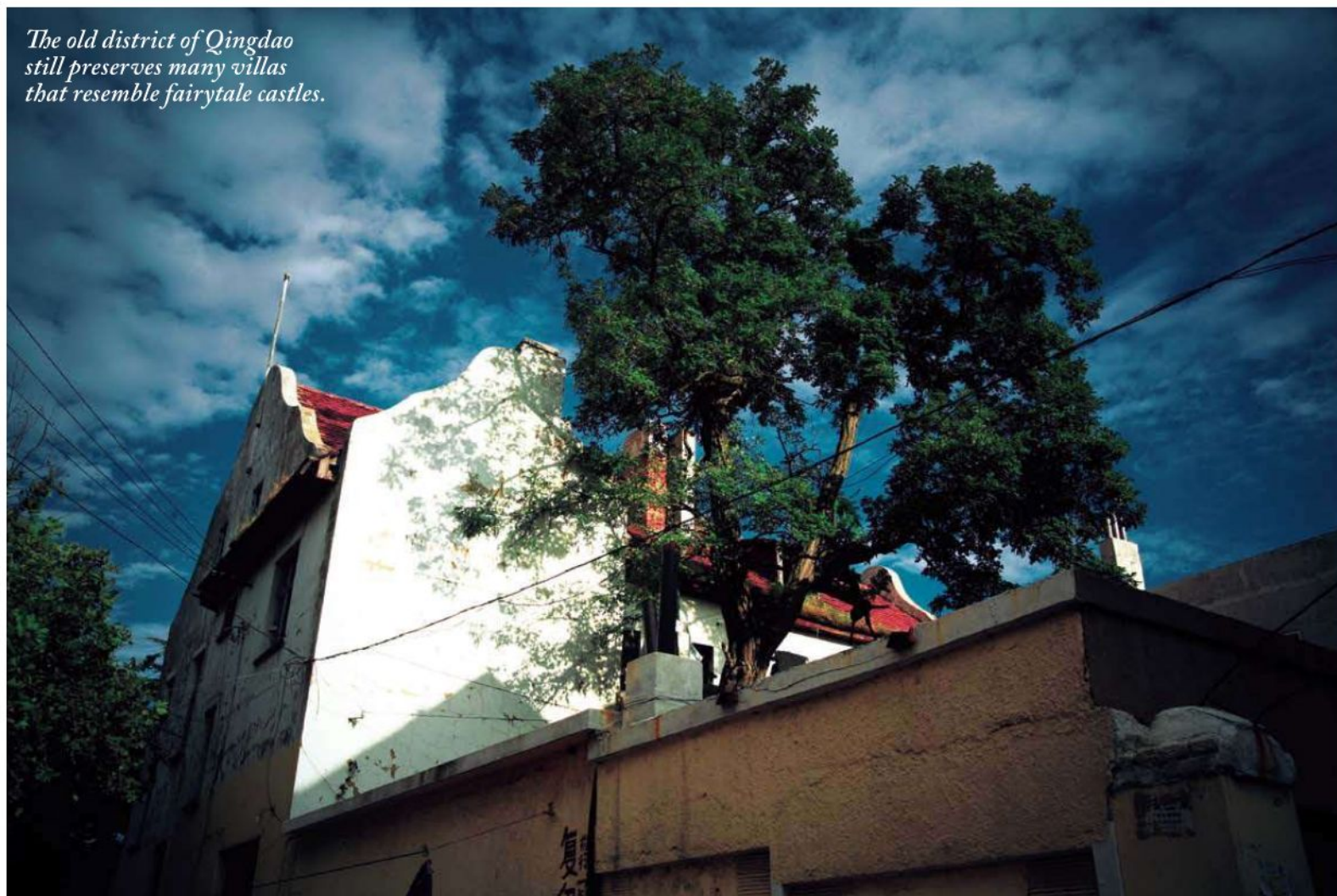
structure in the city. Near the cathedral is a Christian church, which seems straight out of a fairytale with its yellow stone exterior. Several tree-lined alleys connect the old district, sloping up and down.

In the autumn of 1917, Kang Youwei, a prominent political reformer who led the movement to establish a constitutional monarchy in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), arrived in Qingdao. Immediately after suffering a political failure, he found comfort in a city which became so easy to adopt as a home. He described it as featuring “blue ocean, green mountains, thriving trees and red-tiled residences,” along with “pleasant climate and convenient transportation.” In 1923, Kang revisited the city and bought a Western-style building at No.5 Fushanzhi Road. He named the building “Celestial Tour Garden,” and spent his remaining days there until his death in 1927.

Lao She, also a noted Chinese writer, spent three years in Qingdao during the 1930s. In a tranquil courtyard in the city, he completed his magnum opus, *Rickshaw Boy*. Wen Yiduo, a prestigious contemporary Chinese poet, served as president of the Literature College and dean of the Chinese Language and Literature Department of Qingdao University. His former residence – a two-story building located in today's Ocean University of China – was named Yiduo Building. The city's well-preserved old district is home to many such former residences of historic celebrities.

Lu Xun Park in the moonlight.

The old district of Qingdao still preserves many villas that resemble fairytale castles.



St. Michael's Cathedral, built in 1932, witnessed the ups and downs that Qingdao underwent during the colonial era.



From the very beginning, Qingdao has been closely associated with ocean navigation. Pictured is a steering wheel of a ship used to decorate the former German Governor's Mansion.



Colonial Remains

In 1897, Germany began occupying Qingdao by force. The city was a German colony for the next 17 years. Many historic artifacts from the colonial era still remain, including the Qingdao Cement Fort.

The former German Governor's Mansion, which took six years to build, was the official residence of the colonial era's top German official. The mansion was designed entirely like European royal palaces. It is so extravagant, in fact, that the German governor-general was impeached by parliament for building the lavish abode.

The Badaguan (Eight Passes) area is so named because it includes eight streets named after eight great passes of ancient China. The area is famous for its historical diversity, as home to buildings featuring architecture from 20 different countries around the world. A stroll along the eight streets is like flipping through a picture book of European architectural history. The buildings are noted stylistic examples because some designs have even become extinct in their origin countries. Today, the area has become a favorite location for many film and television crews, and to date, more than 60 movies and television programs have been filmed there. The trees planted along the eight streets are also diverse. For instance, Shaoguan

Road is lined with flowering peach trees, Zhengyangguan Road with crape myrtles, Juyongguan Road with mono maples, Zijingguan Road with cedars, and Ningwuguan Road with crabapple trees.

The most famous and representative building in the Badaguan area is the Huashi Villa, located at No. 18 Huanghai Road. It is a European-style castle with facade decorated with round and polygonal patterns and cobblestones, featuring granite-covered exterior and interior walls. Several celebrated historical figures once called the structure home, including Chiang Kai-shek and Chen Yi.

Badaguan's unparalleled fairytale ambience created by the diverse exotic buildings even attracts many couples to use it as the backdrop for their wedding pictures.

Beach and Beer

The Zhan Bridge, a symbol of Qingdao, lies at the southernmost end of Zhongshan Road. Facing Qingdao Bay, it was constructed in 1892 as a military dock during the Qing Dynasty. After reconstruction in 1931, it was expanded from 220 to 440 meters in length and widened by 10 meters. It stretches into the sea, and at the end is a traditional Chinese pavilion with double upturned eaves, which stands out against the European buildings on the shore. Near Zhan Bridge lies Lute Islet. In the 1940s, a dyke was constructed to link the islet with the mainland. When night falls, the islet's lighthouse glows to guide ships into the harbor, causing locals to dub the sight "Light Floating on Lute Islet."

Qingdao boasts a lengthy coastline, but walking along it seldom causes boredom because of the abundance of scenery. Tourists often enjoy meeting elderly locals who chat leisurely next to fishing poles along the shore.

Of course, the city features many swimming beaches, which rival China's top coastal resorts of Hainan Province in terms of water and sand quality. In summer, the sight of residents and visitors across town wearing only bathing suits is not uncommon, as they cross the streets to reach the beach. Because the beaches are usually crowded, many people change suits at home or in hotels before walking to the beach. The more conservative will sometimes cover up with a jacket during the trip.

Many foreigners may not know the city of Qingdao, but often guzzle Tsingtao Beer. The German colonists of a century ago brought with them genuine Munich brewing techniques, which stirred up beer fever throughout China.

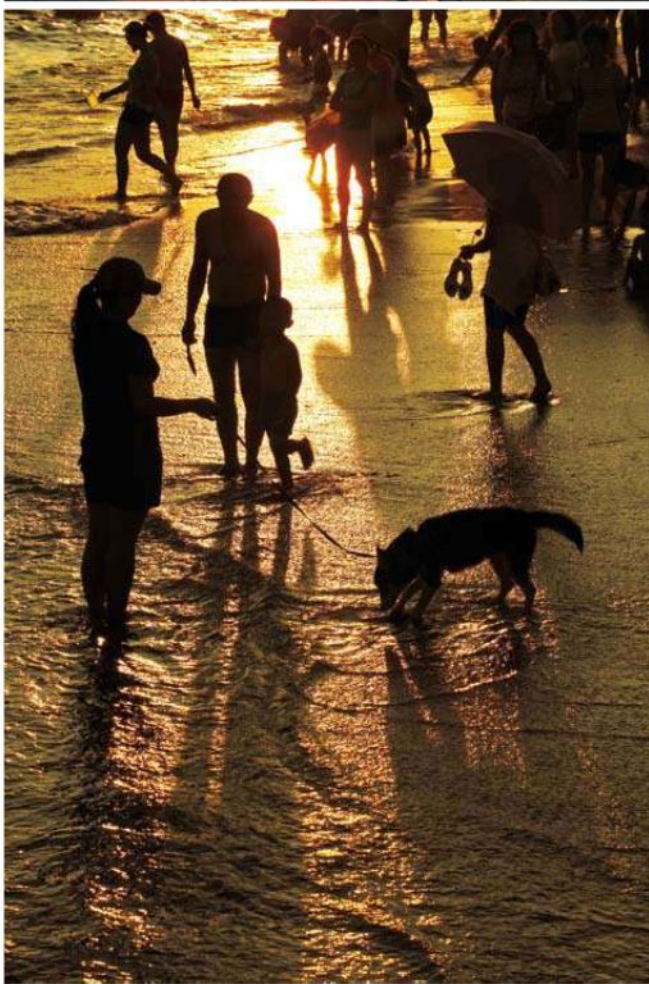
Most beer is sold in traditional bottles, but buyers can also find bulk beer sold by weight. It is not uncommon to see someone carrying a plastic bag of beer in the streets of Qingdao. Since the 1930s, beer drinking has become an inextricable part of everyday life for many Qingdao locals. Since Tsingtao Beer has become a world-famous brand, the city has earned a reputation as China's "beer capital." Though today there are many breweries throughout China producing Tsingtao Beer, enthusiasts insist that the best beer comes only from the original city because brewers use mineral water from nearby Laoshan

Mountain.

In Qingdao, beer often washes down seafood. Clams, which locals call "gala," are common on tables because of their affordable prices. Residents claim that their indigenous clams contain less sand and taste more delicious than those produced elsewhere. Additionally, razor clams, crabs, prawns and sea cucumbers also go great with beer. They are cooked in Qingdao style, which is a branch of Shandong cuisine. Qingdao residents will be the first to tell you that on a summer night, it is delightful relaxation to swig sour, bubbly beer while enjoying the coolness brought by the sea breeze. 



Tourists enjoy sunshine, fresh air, and clear seawater at Qingdao beaches.



The No.1 Bathing Beach at sunset, where waves gently sweep the soft, sandy beach.

The picturesque Daming Lake.

Water Under the Bridges

Text and photographs by Mai Tian



When Jinan is mentioned, most young Chinese people immediately think of *Baotu Spring*, an article commonly studied in elementary school. Written by Lao She, a renowned modern Chinese writer, the essay begins with the sentence, “One-thousand Buddha Mountain, Daming Lake, and Baotu Spring are the three most desirable tourist destinations in Jinan.” Lao She, a Beijing native, went to Jinan to teach at the Qilu University in 1930. Later, he produced a wealth of prose about the city, which still today serves as the city’s most effective advertisement.

In one of his famous works, *The Winter of Jinan*, the writer wrote, “Sitting among mountains and rivers, the time-honored city bathes under sunshine and sleeps comfortably.” Eighty years later, his words still intrigue potential tourists, enticing many of them to visit the city to see for themselves.

A Spring City

Capital of Shandong Province, Jinan boasts a healthy history. Emperor Shun, a legendary leader in ancient China, is thought to have lived in this city. As early as 2,100 years ago, Jinan already had its current name from its location just south of the Jishui River. Along with the changing route of the ancient Yellow River, Jishui River has disappeared completely on today’s maps. However, tourists in Shandong can still find city names related to the water, such as Jining and Jiyuan.

Due to climate and geographic reasons, the majority of cities in northern China are arid with little precipitation. Even in urban landscaping, aquatic elements are seldom used. In terms of both aquatic charm and waterscape, northern cities are normally bested by their southern counterparts. For thousands of years, northern residents spared no efforts in digging water channels, but these man-made projects are undoubtedly inferior to the natural irrigation of the south.

But Jinan is different from many of her northern sisters. It boasts a large number of rivers, and the Yellow and Xiaoqing Rivers, two major aquatic arteries, flow through the city. As the Yellow River’s last major city stop before reaching the sea, Jinan draws great influence from the Yellow River in terms of geography, economy, and culture.

Jinan is better known for its springs. Perhaps because of the elementary school reading, most Chinese people will immediately think of Baotu Spring when speaking of the city. Baotu Spring, celebrated by some as the “No.1 Spring under Heaven,” is also the earliest Jinan artesian spring recorded in ancient literature. In 2002, archaeologists found mentions of Baotu Spring on ancient inscriptions on animal bones and tortoise shells unearthed in Anyang, Henan Province, which date back to 3,543 years ago. Actually, Baotu Spring is among the 72 named artesian springs in downtown Jinan. The city is blessed with more than 700 springs, a rarity in the world.

Before dawn at Heihu (Black Tiger) Spring in downtown Jinan, visitors can already see a large number of

A city of water.



Getting water from the Pipa Spring.



Locals at Baishi Spring, Jinan.



residents taking barrels and buckets to fetch water for daily use.

The Daming Lake

A visit to the Daming Lake can provide tourists a better understanding why Jinan, a northern city, is described by many literary figures with words like “lotus pond” and “lakefront,” which are more often used to depict southern China.

Rain was drizzling down on the day we visited Daming Lake, wrapping the water in mist. Willows and flowers accenting bridges and pavilions designed in southern Chinese style, which line the banks and, alongside islets, divide the lake into several sections.

On one side of the lake is Beiji Pavilion. The pavilion, constructed during the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), overlooks faraway mountains and nearby waters. Tie Bao, a renowned calligrapher of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), once described Daming Lake as “embraced by lotuses and willows, accounting for more than half the city’s picturesque scenery.” During summer, a rainbow of roses blossom throughout Jinan, but near Daming Lake, visitors will find even more flowers, and garden plants, creating a delightful scene.

Along with its beauty, Daming Lake is also a famous water source. Water in the 46-hectare lake derives from Jinan’s various springs, making it the largest spring lake in China.

Through city canals, springs from different parts of the city flow into Daming Lake, before reaching the outlet

at its northern end, which feeds Xiaoqing River. The city is both embraced and injected with water, and so the two have become inseparable.

Protecting the Spring City

Because water is the soul of Jinan, it has become the major feature of the city's cultural heritage. Jinan is working hard to protect its waters. As early as 2004, Baotu Spring Park was already connected to the nearby Wulongtan Park by water. If tourists set off at the moat wharf to the north of the Baotu Spring, they will soon arrive at Wulongtan, after passing the city moat and bridges.

At present, Jinan has enacted an emergency spring protection plan. Only in an arid year, when the normal water supply is insufficient, is the plan activated. Additionally, the city attaches great importance to well protection. "Well protection is vital to the protection of springs," says Li Ming, vice director of Jinan Municipal Archaeological Institute. He believes that ancient wells should be better protected, because some have already been destroyed or damaged by either man or nature. 



Tips:

Water adds a special charm and elegance to Jinan. For tourists, the city is worthy of a week-long stay. Visitors can choose to explore the various springs one by one or spend an afternoon strolling in the tree shade by the moat. Jinan is home to Shandong cuisine, one of China's eight major cuisines, providing more than enough choices when it comes to food.

For the more ambitious explorer, Jinan is an ideal starting point for adventures in more remote nearby regions.

As the provincial capital, Jinan boasts convenient air, railway, and road transportations. By train, it takes only three hours from Jinan to Beijing and two hours to Qingdao, one of the most well-known coastal destinations in northern China. Taishan Mountain, a UNESCO world heritage site, is only 70 kilometers away and features picturesque landscapes and profound cultural heritage.



The city moat at dusk.



The Agate Bridge on the city moat.



A Magic Garden

Text by Zhao Yue

Sichuan Province, located in Southwest China, is now known as a land of abundance, but originally it was a land plagued by floods and droughts. Around 245 B.C., the Sichuanese took action to change this, building the Dujiangyan Project – a complex irrigation system that heralded a more prosperous relationship with nature. Two thousand years later, in 1998, a 24,000-square-meter living water garden was built by the Jinjiang River in Chengdu, the provincial capital, fundamentally altering contemporary Chinese beliefs about nature, specifically water treatment. Utilizing diverse processes including oxido-reduction and microbial decomposition in a natural vegetation purification system,

300 cubic meters of polluted water can be transformed into drinkable water every day. Recently, a Shanghai version of the park was launched, located inside the World Expo's Urban Best Practices Area (UBPA).

The Expo Version

With “living water makes life better” as its theme, the Chengdu garden is the world's first ecological park to feature a manmade wetland water purification system, which won it the UN Habitat Scroll of Honor Award in 1998. Betsy Damon, an environmental art pioneer and one of the lead designers for the park, created the space



The living water park at the Expo Site, IC

to resemble the shape of a fish, a symbol of regeneration in Chinese culture. It was also designed this way to suggest the close relationships between humans, water, and nature.

Inside the Expo's UBPA, Chengdu has put a scaled-down "living water park" on display. This 2,680-square-meter park boasts the same eco-technology to absorb pollution and harmful organisms from dirty water, making it clean. The mini version also contains an environmental-protection education center, as well as plants unique to Sichuan, and Sichuan style structures.

Anyone who has ever been to orthodox water treatment plants will generally remember them as ugly com-

plexes, emitting foul smells and a great deal of noise. But visitors to the water garden at the Expo will be in for a pleasant surprise — greeted with abundant flowers, gurgling streams, and water plants.

The Expo version maintains the fish design of the original, and visitors will first encounter Sun Bird Square which is located at the head. An octagonal pond in the center of the square stores the sewage water and rainwater collected from nearby locales. Dirty water undergoes pre-treatment in this pond. After six to eight hours of sedimentation, it then passes through to stone-carved ponds for oxygen exposure. Next, the water flows to the body of the fish — a manmade wetland.

Comprised of nine plant ponds and 18 plant beds, the wetland grows floating plants, such as duckweed and water lilies, and submerged plants, such as cedar moss and hydrilla. Here, the water undergoes oxidization and sterilization, before passing through cobblestones to a fountain. As visitors step on it, the newly-clean water comes out from the ground.

Nature's Laboratory

The amount of water processed by the original Chengdu Living Water Park is nowhere near enough to improve the city's river water quality. Rather, its purpose is to act as a living environmental education center, spreading an environmentally-conscious message.

The fully-functioning water treatment plant boasts a splendid environment. It is well populated by rare birds and insects, as well as verdant ferns. At the foot of one slope, a board reads: "Watch out for Snakes." This creature is obviously rarely seen in the downtown of a major city.

Water from Chengdu's Jinjiang River flows through the park, where it is carefully purified, before returning to the river once more. Over time, Chengdu's living water garden, with its advanced technologies and natural processes, has become the most popular park in the city. It has been added to the national tourism registry.



Children play with water at the living water park, Chengdu. CFP



Vibrant water. CFP

The Expo version of Chengdu's living water park. CFP





The Shanghai living water park at night. IC

A pump sends the water to terraced fields in Chengdu. CFP

Changes to Jinjiang River

Jinjiang River, also called Funan River, is actually the name for two rivers — Fuhe and Nanhe which cross downtown Chengdu. However, the river, which once brought the city vigor and vitality, turned into a foul gutter during the 1980s. The city's emphasis on rapid modernization caused the waters to become polluted with industrial chemicals and household garbage. Residents could no longer swim, catch fish, or wash their vegetables in the river. Such activities began to exist only in the memories of more senior Chengdu natives.

Sichuan's history suggests a strong bond between locals and their natural surroundings, evidenced by the 2,000-year-old Dujiangyan Project. This connection has been re-affirmed with the construction of the Living Water Park, which has proved successful as an environmental education center, a refuge for wildlife and plants, and a wonderful place for locals to relax.

"The living water park shows the way for city planning officials to progress to sustainable urban development," says Fang Lei, vice director of the Chengdu Living Water Park at the Shanghai Expo. "The park is included in the UBPA, and we hope more city planners can learn something from the project. We hope more cities' water management and urban planning can fit with the theme of 'Better City, Better Life.'" 



Indigenous Sichuan plants are planted in the living water park, Chengdu. CFP

Herbs and medicinal plants are distinctive features of the Li medicine.



Herbal Remedies

*Text by Tan Xingyu
Photographs by Li Hao*



This plain plant is effective for treating rheumatism.

In 1994, Professor Yuan Hao, from the First Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou University of Chinese Medicine, cured a patient diagnosed with avascular necrosis using medicinal herbs from a recipe of the Li ethnic group. Yuan first witnessed the efficacy of ancient Li treatments when he was based in Hainan Province during the 1960s and early 1970s. He remembers encountering a young worker whose foot was injured by a faulty machine. The local hospital didn't provide much help, and doctors believed that amputation would be the patient's only choice. But the young man's family pursued other options and brought in an elderly Li ethnic doctor. The doctor pounded fresh herbs into a paste which he applied to the patient's foot. Two months later, the young man completely recovered. Amazed at hearing this news, Professor Yuan sought out the doctor and was given the prescription, which he soon began using on his own patients.

After President Richard Nixon visited China in 1972, awareness of acupuncture and other forms of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) began to spread in the U.S. as an alternative treatment and soon became popular throughout the world. In China, TCM is most popular amongst the majority Han people, and various ethnic minorities have their own traditional treatments. One such tradition is that of the Li people, who mainly inhabit Hainan Island, China's southernmost province.

Hainan Island is a tropical paradise, boasting abundant animal and plant resources. Among Hainan's more than 5,000 medicinal plants, half are frequently used in medical practice, accounting for 40 percent of the nation's total. In addition, nearly 1,000 species of animals, including insects, are used as ingredients in traditional Li medicine. Various wild vegetables also possess medicinal properties. The Li people are believed to have been the first inhabitants of Hainan, and therefore also the first on the island to experiment with local natural resources to cure diseases.

The Li people live mostly in mountainous areas, home to abundant snakes and insects that can potentially be very dangerous. In addition, islanders are at risk of falling victim to various diseases which thrive in the humid climate. Over years of practice, the Li have mastered their own effective ways of treating myriad ailments by making use of their immediate natural surroundings. Plants and herbs are used to treat venomous bites, injuries and fractures, and even typhoid, as well as liver, tropical and immunological diseases.

Along with substantial empirical evidence for the efficacy of Li traditional medicine, local villages also abound with various myths and legends. Some senior herbal doctors are rumored to be able to produce "love potions," which are said to make a person forever besotted with his or her lover. Although this sounds like fanciful romanticism at best, and witchery at worst, researchers have found that some herbs do actually release certain scents which are capable of influencing hormone secretions.



Wuzhishan, or Five Fingers Mountain, located in Hainan's hinterland, is home to plentiful medicinal herbs.



Excessive collecting has already threatened Hainan's herb resources.

Medicines are commonly administered orally, or rubbed into affected areas of the body, but sometimes Li remedies are taken in a more unusual way: wrapped up in small cloth bags and attached to the person by red thread. It is believed that the scent emanating from the bag can revitalize spirits, and some Li even 'wear' herbs as an ancient form of contraceptive.

Women have long played an important role in Li medicine practices, an effect of the matrilineal nature of ancient society. The roles of doctor and chemist are one and the same, with doctors extremely knowledgeable about pharmaceutical complexities, and pharmacists acting as very able doctors.

The job does not confer professional status, and most doctors in a village are actually amateurs, pursuing other careers at the same time (usually farming). Thus, many doctors choose to specialize in a certain area. Education comes through following a senior "medical lady" who passes on her knowledge to the next generation. The teacher will frequently take her students on field trips to identify plants, their medicinal parts, and the growth habits of different herbs. It has long been the custom that, upon graduation, the tutor will kill a rooster during a ceremony to mark the end of study. Afterwards, students are free to collect herbs and practice medicine on their own.

The Li have no written language, and so pass on

their medical knowledge orally, which has left the future of the practice in a precarious position. Becoming a Li doctor brings with it considerable responsibilities, but the average income is not much different to other much less stressful jobs. Some believe that this is one of the reasons why young people rarely want to study ancient medicine. Existing Li doctors are mostly elderly villagers, with some even in their seventies.

There is another challenge to the continuation of tradition. Rapid development of Hainan Province has meant that precious herbs able to produce direct economic benefits are under threat of over-exploitation. *Stephania succifera*, a renowned Li herb used to treat cancer, has recently been given Class II State Protection. In the wild it is seldom found, almost to the point of extinction. Zhong Yi, author of *Hainan Plants Record* and professor of botany at Hainan Normal University, expresses his concerns about plant protection on the island. He has been calling for special measures to ensure that Li communities can continue to utilize natural resources and safeguard their traditional way of life. In a wider sense, Zhong believes that Hainan's unique geographical location and its abundant species are vital to human survival and development. "It will be a great pity if Li doctors of later generations can not find any available herbs," he says.

Moxibustion proves to be effective for many difficult diseases.



Medicinal liquor is believed to be able to cure diseases, including rheumatism. It is commonplace to see it in local markets.



Many Li people know at least some herb knowledge.





The Li people celebrate a local festival.



Precious herbs often grow in precipitous locations.



Crows are very smart and couples are strictly monogamous.

As the Crow Flies

Text and photographs by Zou Dali

Along Beijing's major thoroughfares such as Chang'an and Qianmen, it's not uncommon to spot flocks of crows in the early evening. These crows tend to rest on buildings and in trees through the night, and fly away in groups in the morning. Many curious locals and visitors have pondered where the crows come from and why there are so many.

Across the ages, and throughout a variety of cultures, crows have been stigmatized as a bird of bad luck. They are commonly seen as pests, and find few admirers. In rural areas, they destroy crops in the fields and fruit in the orchards, and in the cities, they disturb residents, especially in winter. When night falls, most crows perch on porches and rooftops, breaking the silence with their bothersome cawing. Scavengers of rotten meat by nature, the birds are adept at spreading disease, and their excrement in bulk can be devastating.

Crows spend the day in the suburbs and the night in the city proper.



Flocks of crows in the skies of downtown Beijing as night falls.



Over the past few years, I've investigated the origins of these crows. In Beijing's suburban areas, there are plenty of fields and wetlands – the ideal home for these birds. They scavenge for food and water during the day and like to spend the night in urban areas because it is warmer, and trash along the roadsides provides ideal late night snacks.

Guo Geng, a specialist in wild animal protection, believes that the rise in crow numbers is related to environmental issues. "Crows are natural city sweepers," he explains. "Rats, harmful insects, and spoilage are their food – making them a fascinating link in the urban food chain." It goes without saying that large flocks of crows are extremely troublesome to city dwellers, so their infestation becomes a major concern for many metropolitan residents around the world.

Actually, crows are quite intelligent compared to other species. One of their characteristics is strict, lifelong monogamy in mating. Child-raising is a shared responsibility for both genders, which practice regurgitation-feeding. They even look after their elderly.

Overseas scientific research shows that the sensory ability of the crows is on a par with some primates, ranking them the most intelligent of avian species – even smarter than talking parrots. 



Crows compete with deer for food.

Long Lost Brothers

Text by Su Yuemin

A Dungan bride in traditional embroidered clothes and hairstyle.



“China my motherland, you are far, far away. As are my brothers and sisters, whom I never see...” In his courtyard in Kazakhstan’s Masanchi Village, Suahunov Dau, a 60-something Dunganese poet, recites his self-penned verse in a strong Shaanxi accent. When he is finished, his eyes gaze in the direction of the distant majestic Tianshan Mountains, a seemingly insurmountable barrier between him and the land of his ancestors: China.

In May 2010, I joined a group of five journalists in a visit to Kazakhstan and the villages of Masanchi and Sortobe in Zhambyl Province, nearly 300 kilometers away from Almaty. There live the Dungan, an enigmatic ethnic group of Chinese origin who still preserve folk customs and traditions of the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Mr. Dau is a noted Dunganese poet who has written verses inspired by a feeling of homesickness towards the China of his imagination. He has given himself a Chinese name, Su Zunshi, which means “respecting the facts.”

According to An Husai, president of the Kazakhstan Dunganese Association (KDA), there are about 130,000 Dungan people in Central Asia, mostly living in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The Dungan population in Kazakhstan is somewhere between 50,000 and 60,000.

Remnants of the Qing Lifestyle

A group of the Hui people, following a failed rebellion against the Qing court in the late 19th century, fled north-western China’s Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces and settled in Central Asia. Here, they became known as the Dungan. Despite living in Central Asia for more than 130 years now, they still preserve the Qing-Dynasty lifestyle and folk customs, carefully handed down from generation to generation. Some aspects of Chinese culture that have disappeared in China can still be found in Dungan villages.

Most Dungan speak Russian, but at home they still communicate using old Shaanxi dialect, which is believed to differ little from that used during the Qing period. Most Dungan can’t read Chinese though: The majority of first-generation Dungan were poorly-educated farmers, and the ethnic group has long been separated from China. Instead, they write using a complex hybrid language which combines Shaanxi pronunciation and Russian letters. Each of them has both Chinese and Russian names.

In Dungan villages, both Western-style suits and traditional Chinese dress can be seen. But at weddings, traditional outfits are obligatory. Typically, the groom will wear a hand-embroidered robe, a traditional Hui skull-cap, and a pair of riding boots. The bride will usually wear a red silk dress inlaid with dragon and phoenix patterns, a pair of Qing-style embroidered shoes, and their hair in a tall chignon, with a red flower perched on top. Custom dictates that the bride and groom will dress this way for a week. In present-day China, such traditions can only be found in television dramas and movies that depict Qing-style weddings.

In his home, An Husai treated us to a bowl of delicious hand-pulled noodles. "The cooking method remains identical to that used a century ago," he says with pride. Traditional Chinese foods like noodles and *sanzi* (a kind of fried wheat-based snack), which were brought here by the immigrating Dungan, have become popular with native Kazakhs. Cooking techniques are much imitated, and the original Chinese names for the dishes adorn the menus of many local restaurants.

The Dungan Culture Museum in Masanchi houses a plethora of historic relics brought here by the original Dungan people, including farming tools, ancient Chinese musical instruments like the dulcimer and the *erhu* (a two-stringed instrument like a cello), and traditional clothing dating back to the Qing Dynasty. According to Yarchube Iskov, head of the village, a number of traditional celebrations are also held in the museum every year.

Dungan people believe that more children bring more blessings. For this reason, the majority of local families have at least four children each. In Kazakhstan, women who give birth to six or more children are praised as "heroic mothers." According to An Husai, there are more than 600 such heroines in Masanchi and Sortobe.

Diligent People

More than a century ago, the ancestors of the Dungan endured a difficult journey to Central Asia over the Tian-shan Mountain Range. Such an experience has engendered in the ethnic group the spirit of persistence and diligence. Using seeds and farming tools which they carried from China, the Dungan quickly began reclaiming wasteland and planting vegetables such as tomato, cucumber, garlic and Chinese onion. Many of these vegetables were never planted before in the region. Now, this produce is popular in Almaty, and even exported as far away as Russia. Statistics reveal that Dungan people contribute half of Kazakhstan's total vegetable supply. Through planting vegetables, Dungan people have enriched the local diet, and made their own lives more prosperous.

On the way back to Almaty, we encountered many cars heading towards the Dungan village. Our guide, Ilias, told us that they were local farmers returning from their vegetable plots after a day's work. According to An Husai, on average a local Dungan family earns US\$3,000-4,000 a year and owns 1-2 cars. Motor vehicles are a necessary mode of transport for local farmers to commute between homes and croplands and to transport vegetables.

Starting in the late 1980s, economic and cultural exchanges between Dungan villages and China, especially communications with Shaanxi Province, have seen a rapid increase. More and more Dungan people are engaged in border trade with China. An Husai is one of them. He has visited China several times, bringing back with him advanced technology and equipment. Dungan people recently began utilizing greenhouse technology from China, so that they could grow vegetables all year round. In recent years, they have also begun to utilize Chinese equipment to manufacture bricks, biscuits and paint.

Sanzi (a kind of fried wheat-based food) remains a traditional snack of today's Dungan people. by Wang Lei

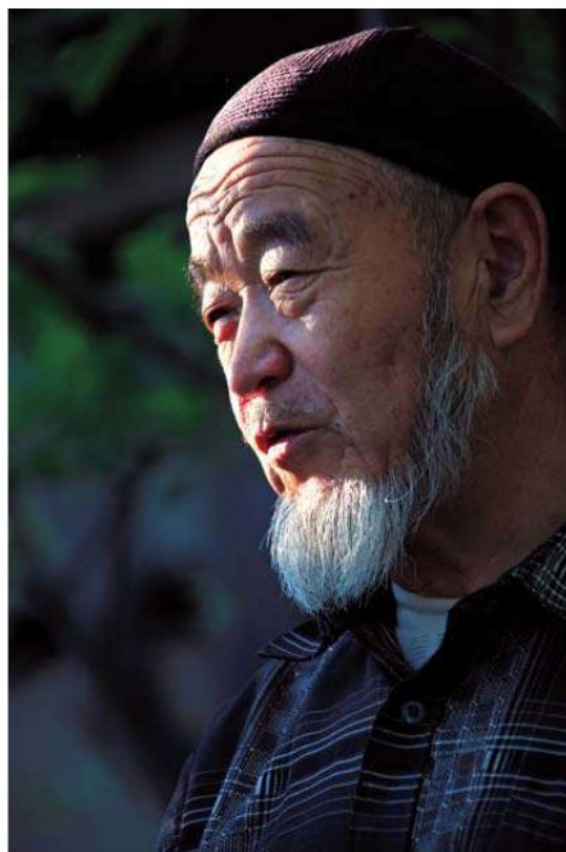


Masanchi Middle School, one of the largest schools in Zhambyl Province. by Yang Jia



Dungan children in Masanchi Village. by Yang Jia

*Su Zunshi, a
Dunganese poet.
by Yang Jia*



*An Husai, presi-
dent of the Ka-
zakhstan Dunga-
nese Association,
illustrates Dun-
gans' extensive
cooperation with
China in recent
years. by Yang Jia*



*Dungan brides still
dress in traditional
Qing costumes at
weddings.*



According to An Husai, the Kazakhstan government has formulated policies to aid the development of the Dungan people. But in the early days, when Kazakhstan was a newly independent state, traffic police set up a number of toll booths on the road which Dungan people used to transport vegetables. In 2002, An Husai reported this problem to Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who immediately ordered the removal of more than 60 toll stations. The road was later named the “green passage.”

Ties of Friendship

According to Yarchube Iskokov, Dungan people attach great importance to education. Presently, Masanchi Village has four schools, with more than 3,000 students enrolled. Two of the four schools offer only Kazakh-language programs, while students in the other two need to learn Kazakh, Russian, English and Dungan. Each year, the KDA sponsors 60-70 exchange students to study in Chinese colleges, such as Northwest University, Xi'an International Studies University, and Lanzhou University. Currently, An Husai's son is learning Chinese at Fudan University in Shanghai.

To honor their Chinese roots and encourage trade and cultural exchanges with China, the KDA plans to establish a Confucius Institute in Kazakhstan, so that more Dungan people will have a chance to learn Chinese.

The KDA has set up a representative office in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province, to facilitate bilateral exchange and cooperation. The provincial government of Shaanxi has also dispatched Chinese teachers to teach Dungan people Chinese language as well as agricultural specialists to educate them on new vegetable growing technology. Today, the Dungan people serve as a friendly bridge between China and Kazakhstan. 

(Additional photos courtesy of the Kazakhstan Dunganese Association)

The Origins of the Dungan

In the 1860-70s, an uprising in support of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom swept across China. At the same time, the Hui people allied with other ethnic groups in northwestern China's Shaanxi, Gansu and Ningxia areas to rebel against the Qing court. This uprising failed, and an army comprised of 10,000 people fled westwards. Many died on the road, but some 3,000 emigrants crossed the Tianshan Mountains and eventually reached the Chui River which was then part of the Russian Empire. There, they settled to plant seeds brought from China, and gradually formed an ethnic group that became known as the Dungan (meaning “people from the east” in Shaanxi dialect).

A Dunganese vegetable field at the foot of the Tianshan Mountains. by Yang Jia



*Teacher Wu nurtures Xiao Yu
with patience and love.*

His Solo Class

Text and photographs by Guan Wei



Xiao Yu attentively listens to his teacher in the spacious classroom.



Whenever bored, Xiao Yu would clutch his mother's arm, while the teacher stops for a short break.



The exhausted mother takes a nap.

At a desk-packed classroom in Xixin Primary School of Longquan City, Zhejiang Province, a teacher is leading a single student in reading a Chinese text aloud. Xiao Yu, in second grade, suffers from autism. Due to this, he has been unable to attend regular classes. But this semester, he is being taught by a new teacher specially employed by the school.

When Xiao Yu was three, his father, Mr. Ye, noticed that his child seldom spoke and refused to communicate with others. After conducting examinations, doctors suspected that the little boy was autistic, but were unable to make a definite diagnosis due to his young age. "We had no idea how it happened, but we knew his behavior was not normal," Mr. Ye recalls. "When watching TV at home, he might suddenly cry or laugh without reason, and except for myself and his mother, he did not respond to anybody who called his name. He would not even look at them." Xiao Yu appeared to live in his own world, which touchingly, his father refers to as "probably just as wonderful as ours."

Despite his autistic tendencies, Xiao Yu was sent by his parents to a kindergarten for regular pre-school education. However, his actions soon began to concern teachers and other parents. During class, he would sometimes suddenly stand up to walk around the room, advance to the blackboard to scribble something, or even approach the teacher and latch on to one of her legs. Because of this, when Xiao Yu attended a class, his mother would stand outside watching through the windows. When the child misbehaved, the mother would enter the classroom, take the boy out, and only send him back after he had calmed down.

The Ye couple sacrificed a great deal to ensure a decent education for their son. When he turned six, they sent him to a special school for autistic children in Shanghai. "The Shanghai schooling was effective," Ye says. "When he returned home after just a week of study, he began calling us 'Dad' and 'Mom'." But the extremely high fees of the school were a heavy burden on the Ye's modest income, and after only a year's study, they had to take their son back to their home city, Longquan.

There, Ye enrolled Xiao Yu in Xixin Primary School, but the school soon received complaints from the parents of other students, which caused a dilemma for Principal Ye Yudong. A single student should not be allowed to affect the study of the whole class, but at the same time, every child has the right to be educated. "We must not abandon him," the principal determined.

And so at the beginning of the latest semester, the school hired a teacher to look after Xiao Yu alone. The principal noted that the boy usually began to misbehave around 20 minutes into class, so the teacher was allowed to rearrange the length of lessons, rather than adhering to the conventional 45 minutes.

"I really appreciate the school for its supportive measures," says Xiao Yu's father. "Tuition is free during the compulsory education period, but the Xixin School would rather hire a teacher at its own expense to ensure that no student drops out. This is a great gift for our family." Considering that a purely isolated curriculum may not be good for Xiao Yu's development, the school offers one-on-one teaching only in core classes like Chinese and mathematics, while encouraging him to join his schoolmates for music and PE.

Seeing his child mature each day, the father is happy and grateful. He also harbors hope for a miracle so that Xiao Yu can one day walk out of his lonely world to lead a normal, healthy life. 

The transformation in Xiao Yu is already noticeable.



Each day, Xiao Yu is escorted by his mother to attend school.



Pet Boom

Text and photographs by Qiu Lei



Cheng Xiao considers her cats family members.



Wang Yan, a business partner of Cheng Xiao, is also a cat lover.



One morning, Cheng Xiao was awakened by frantic knocking on the door of her home. She rushed to answer it, and was greeted by an angry scowl from her mother, who then accused Cheng's cats of "murdering" a pair of her pet birds the night before.

Now, Cheng often laughs about the event with her friends. Before, her parents, who live in the same neighborhood, never really criticized her much for taking in so many stray cats. But this particular incident was different because the dead birds were her mother's favorites.

In the garden in front of Cheng's house, several cats rest lazily under the shade of the dense foliage, near a massive dish of cat food. Cheng doesn't refer to the adopted felines as "homeless cats," but rather "free-range cats." Every day, the cats come to her garden to eat, but they never enter her house.

Inside, cat memorabilia can be found all over Cheng's home. Her love affair with cats started years ago, on a day she went for a walk with her husband. On a shadowy street corner, the couple happened upon a helpless cat tied up with an iron wire. Cheng rescued the animal, and it became her first charity case.

Cheng imagined the cat might feel lonely to be the only pet at her home, so she decided to find it a companion. She turned to the internet, and found a website

dedicated to rescuing homeless cats, Luckycats.net. After browsing the site for a few minutes, Cheng found her cat a suitable partner, but when she attempted to adopt it, the website indicated that the cat already had an intimate friend at the shelter. So Cheng adopted them both.

Once, Cheng rescued an abandoned cat that was suffering from an inflamed spinal cord. Some veterinarians suggested that the animal could be saved by amputating one of its limbs, but Cheng insisted on pharmacological treatment. After trying all the medicine she could find, Cheng was on the verge of conceding to the illness, when the cat miraculously recovered.

Cheng's love for cats has affected those around her. Along with two partners who live nearby, she has run a design studio for 10 years, and the business is strengthened by the group's common fondness for felines. Wang Yan, a designer in their studio, enjoys not only raising cats, but drawing them as well.

Luckily, many people in Cheng's community are animal lovers. A female neighbor, who is also a designer, has always had an open door for homeless cats. A community rumor goes that on a chilly winter night, all of the homeless cats in the area gathered in the woman's house to find warmth.

"When I feed the cats in the morning," Cheng explains, "my garden is crowded like a zoo. Many local el-

Cheng Xiao collects hundreds of cat-themed artifacts to celebrate her love for the animal.

ders bring their grandchildren here to watch.”

Although Cheng’s father claims to prefer dogs, he is clearly proud of what his daughter is doing to care for so many homeless cats. One time, when hosting friends visiting from the United States, he brought his guests to his daughter’s house, where they were impressed by the cat population and cat-themed art.

In recent years in China, more and more people like Cheng have become animal lovers, inspired by a deepening awareness of the special relationship between humans and animals.

Two decades ago, a white Pekinese poodle was sold for 30,000 yuan to a Beijing man at an auction. This was an incredible sum at the time, especially when considering that the average Beijing worker took home only 100 yuan a month back then. In that era, pets were rare in Chinese households, and Pekinese lovers often had to smuggle them in from neighboring countries, even though the dog is native to China. In the 21st century, many Chinese now see pets as part of their families and raising them at home has even become a popular lifestyle.

However, despite the recent boom in pet ownership, there are only a few professional animal rescue organizations in China, and government funds are used primarily to protect endangered and rare wildlife such as pandas, mustangs, golden monkeys, Tibetan antelopes, and black-necked cranes. Some nongovernmental organizations offer assistance to homeless urban pets, but most of them lack adequate funds and personnel to really fix the problem.

Volunteers often feed homeless cats in streets, parks, and residential areas across the country, and most agree that a sterilization drive is the best solution to curtail the homeless numbers. However, most of the volunteers have humble incomes, and lack the economic power to pay for the expensive operation needed for so many animals.

Along with the pricey sterilization procedure, many pet-lovers are bothered by those who misconstrue that sterilization is inhumane. Mr. Chang, who lives in suburban Beijing, reveals why just the opposite is true. Two years ago, he rescued a wounded dog on the highway and took it home. A year later, the dog gave birth to a dozen puppies that all needed a home and care. Surprised by the dog’s fertility, he immediately decided to sterilize all of his dogs.

Although it is a traditional custom in some areas of China to eat dog meat, more and more people voluntarily abstain from it. The manager of a dog club, Wei Shouping, frequents a Hunanese restaurant near his home. One day, the restaurant manager notified him of a plan to begin serving several dishes featuring dog meat. The plan evoked fierce opposition from Wei, who then warned that he would spread the word to boycott the restaurant if it did so. Wei’s threat was effective, and the restaurant abolished the plan.

“As more and more people raise dogs as pets, the numbers who oppose eating dog are also increasing,” claims Wei.

Statistics show that those born in the 1980s and 1990s

are more likely to love animals. However, pets are often celebrated for their ability to improve the health of the elderly who live alone, and to offer companionship for so many of the “only” children in China. Modern city dwellers, even when they live in the same community, often lack mutual communication. “Pets help people build social relationships,” comments Cheng Xiao. “This is an important reason why pets are needed even more in the information age.”

Pet ownership not only offers a different lifestyle and an acute awareness of all of our non-human neighbors, but fuels an emerging industry.

The pet industry includes the production and consumption of food supplies, medical care, hairdressing, photography, periodicals, and the list goes on. In 2008, China’s pet industry realized an annual output of 20 billion yuan, a figure which is likely to double in 2010, evidencing how incredibly fast the industry has grown.

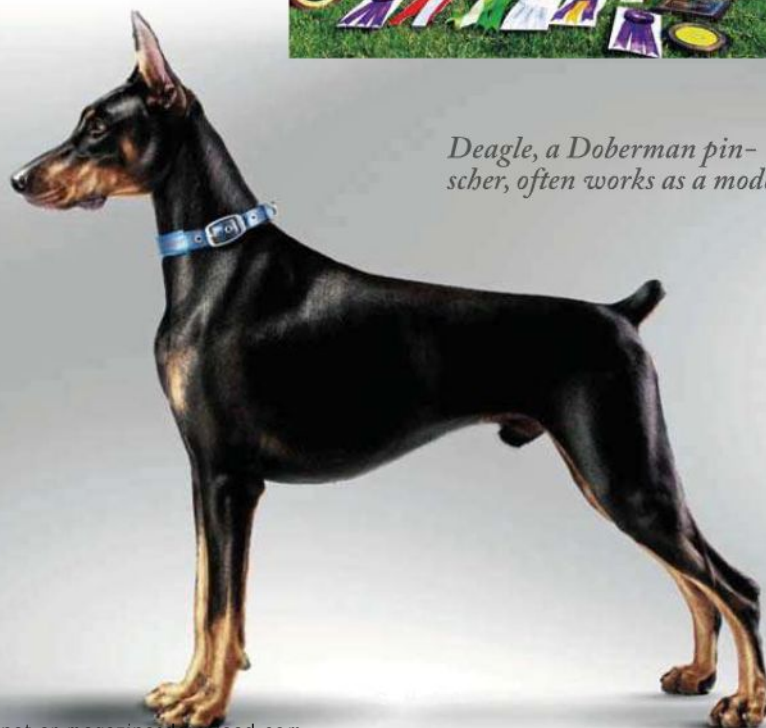
However, the increasing numbers of pets in China have already caused some social problems, such as injuries from dog bites and disturbances from barking. It is commonly recognized that owners, rather than the pets themselves, are responsible for these problems. Therefore, education of pet owners is another facet of the pet industry that needs to be developed. 



Wei Shouping and Deagle, his favorite Doberman pinscher. Wei is proud of the dozens of medals that his Doberman pinscher has won.



Deagle, a Doberman pinscher, often works as a model.

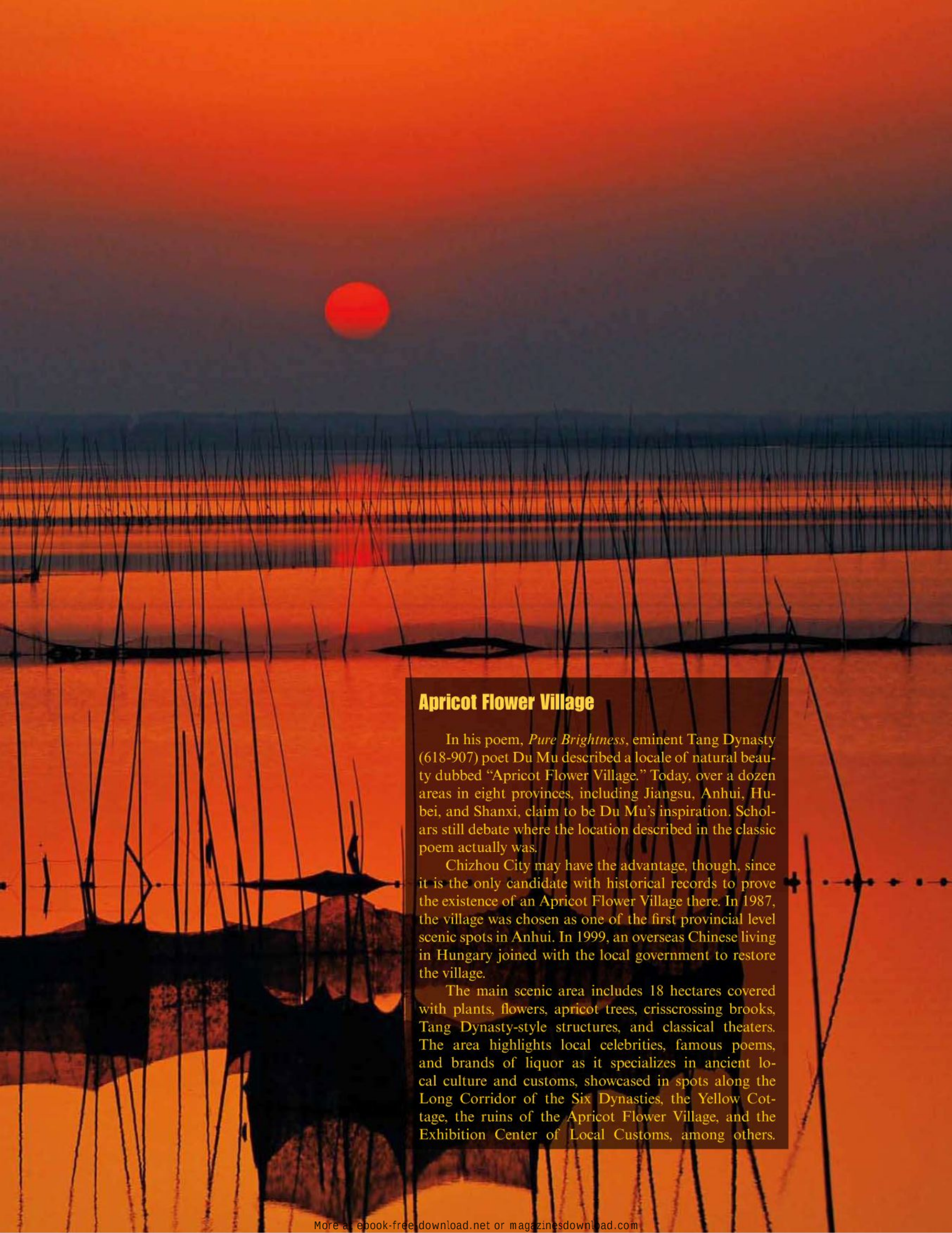


Text by Sheng Wenpeng
Photographs courtesy of China City Newspapers Photo Society

PRESERVED BRIGHTNESS

Touching the Yangtze River in the north and Yellow Mountain (Mt. Huangshan) in the south, Chizhou, in southwestern Anhui Province, is not only an important port city along the Yangtze, but also a famous tourist city at both state and provincial levels.

Bathing in the setting sun. by Jiang Zhi



Apricot Flower Village

In his poem, *Pure Brightness*, eminent Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet Du Mu described a locale of natural beauty dubbed "Apricot Flower Village." Today, over a dozen areas in eight provinces, including Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei, and Shanxi, claim to be Du Mu's inspiration. Scholars still debate where the location described in the classic poem actually was.

Chizhou City may have the advantage, though, since it is the only candidate with historical records to prove the existence of an Apricot Flower Village there. In 1987, the village was chosen as one of the first provincial level scenic spots in Anhui. In 1999, an overseas Chinese living in Hungary joined with the local government to restore the village.

The main scenic area includes 18 hectares covered with plants, flowers, apricot trees, crisscrossing brooks, Tang Dynasty-style structures, and classical theaters. The area highlights local celebrities, famous poems, and brands of liquor as it specializes in ancient local culture and customs, showcased in spots along the Long Corridor of the Six Dynasties, the Yellow Cottage, the ruins of the Apricot Flower Village, and the Exhibition Center of Local Customs, among others.

Great King Cave

The Great King Cave of Pailou Town in Guichi District is a state Grade AAAA scenic area, featuring a variety of pristine aquatic sites such as waterfalls, fountains, and pools around a large karst cave. An abundance of rock formations can also be found, including stalactites, stalagmites, rock columns, and lotus-shaped rocks.

The cave is divided into five areas, respectively called the Bridge of Heaven, the Ravine of Rain, the Mansion of the Great King, the Lake of the Great King, and the Cableway.

The Bridge of Heaven is a natural stone bridge, 52 meters high, 64 meters wide, and 73 meters deep. It serves as a gateway to the whole scenic area. Experts assert that such a formation is a rarity on the planet. The Ravine of Rain is a miniature virgin forest with ancient trees touching the sky and waterfalls plunging off sheer cliffs. The Mansion of the Great King Cave is a world of hills, water,

karst caves, and man-made landscapes. Stretching some 3,500 meters away, it features brooks running through caves, with fresh air and mild climate throughout the year.

As well as its natural scenery, the cave area is also famous for tea, which has become an important income source for locals thanks to the thriving tourism sector.

Immortal masks. by Wang Qingdong



Peaks of Immortals, Mt. Jiuhua. by Wu Shaolong

Mt. Jiuhua

Mt. Jiuhua is an international Buddhist ashram, one of China's four major mountains sacred to Buddhism, and one of the first Grade AAAAA scenic areas in the country.

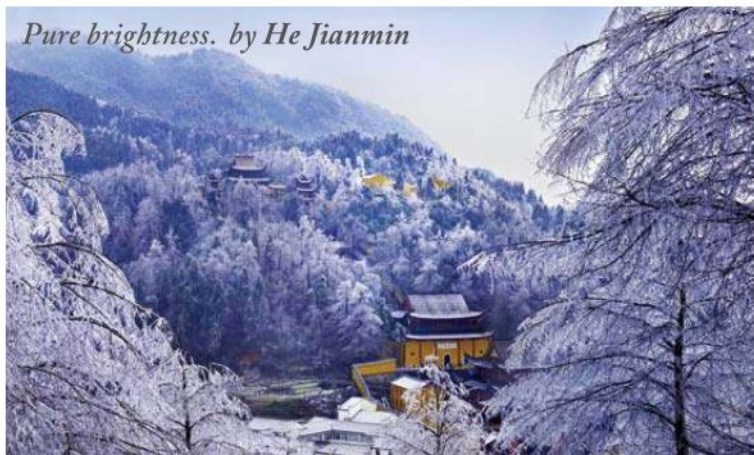
The most noticeable phenomena of the 100-square-kilometer mountain are mysterious flesh-body Bodhisattvas – remains of ancient eminent monks and nuns with their flesh preserved. Historical records reveal that there were once 14 flesh-body Bodhisattvas, but only five remain today. It's no surprise that since the Tang Dynasty, the place has been considered a holy place for Buddhists in China.

Many still ponder why there are so many “flesh bodies” and it is a mystery as to how they are preserved so remarkably.

Another attraction of Mt. Jiuhua is the Flower Stand Scenic Area. Towering 1,291 meters above sea level, the Flower Stand is a typical granite landform, with endless peaks, oddly-shaped rocks, secluded ravines, and vast expanses of forests. The elevation of the mountain delays the blooming of flowers, and May is the best season to enjoy azaleas.

With an aim to strengthen tourism in this immensely attractive area and showcase recent economic and social progress, the local government of Chizhou and the China City Newspaper Photo Society jointly launched a photography campaign from May 21 to 25, 2010, which attracted more than 130 photographers from around the country.

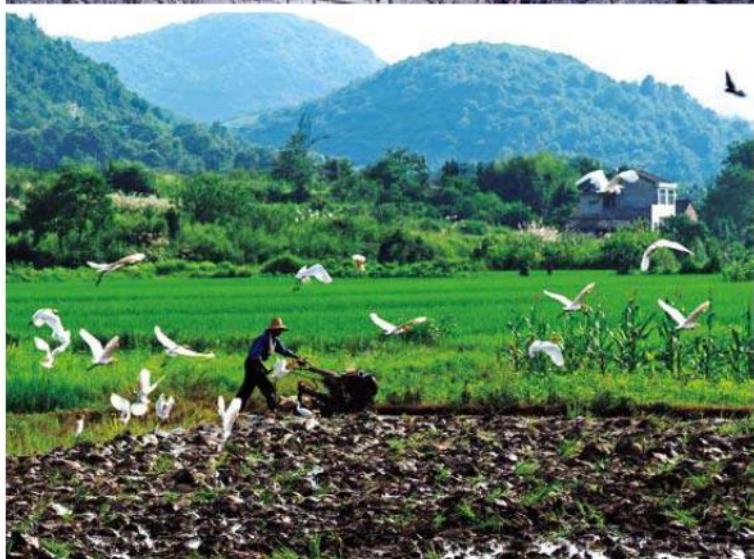




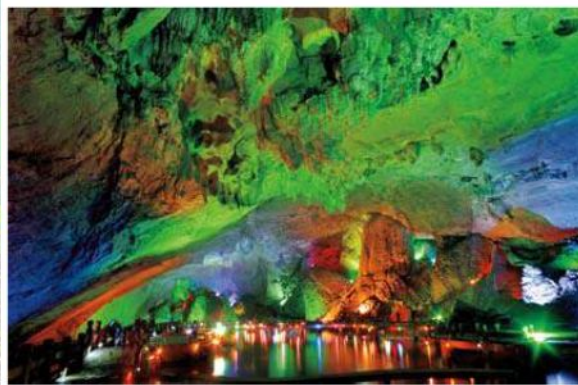
Pure brightness. by He Jianmin



A fairyland. by Ding Changjie



Qingyang County was honored by the government in 2008 for its natural environment. by Wu Shaolong



Inside a karst cave. by Wu Xudong



The first ray of sunlight. by Wu Shaolong



The Formidable Fortress

Text and photographs by Tang Tao

Of the 6,000 kilometers of the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the 26-kilometer stretch known as Shanhaiguan (literally “Mountain and Sea Pass”) hosts a fortress that served as a vital passage to Northeast China. During an era of frequent conflict, the fortress was only a tiny piece of the country’s massive, intricate defense system.

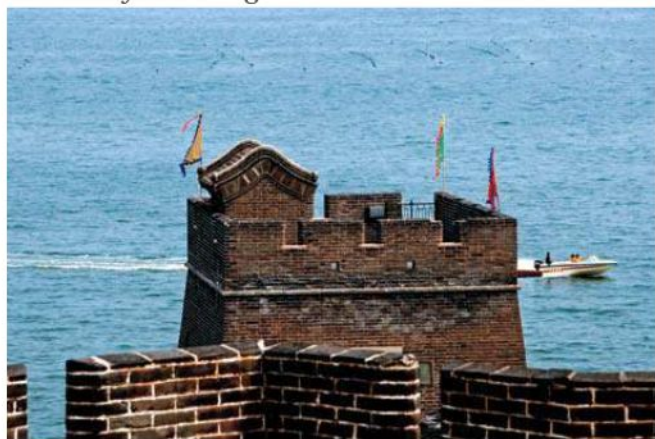
Historical records report that in 1381, the 14th year of the Hongwu reign of the Ming Dynasty, General Xu Da was ordered to construct a military fort between the Yanshan Mountains in the north and the Bohai Sea in the south, which led to the descriptive name of the base.

Due to its strategically important location, Shanhaiguan was surrounded by a stone wall stretching four kilometers and continually had troops stationed there. Although smaller than many other ancient cities around China, the fortress is affectionately dubbed the “First Pass Under Heaven.”

These days, the ancient fortress is under special protection as a popular tourist attraction and World Cultural Heritage Site, lying 15 kilometers northeast of urban Qinhuangdao in Hebei Province.

The Shanhaiguan section of the Great Wall connects Old Dragon’s Head in the south to Jiumenkou in the north. The 26 kilometers feature 129 castles, passes, watchtowers, and beacon towers. The fortress was

A corner of Old Dragon’s Head.



equipped with a variety of ancient defensive facilities amidst its four gates, forming an intimidating deterrent to potential invaders. Luo Zhewen, a noted expert in the study of the Great Wall and ancient Chinese architecture, went so far as to call Shanhaiguan “the most essential section of the Great Wall.”

As an iconic piece of the Great Wall, Shanhaiguan is not only a symbol of the national spirit of China, but has emerged as a cornerstone of history. Over its 600 years of existence, it served as the “shelter of Beijing and the throat of eastern Liaoning” and a strategic passage between North China and Northeast China. The area has an impressive resume of historic events and epic battles. In 1644, at nearby Shihe, Li Zicheng, the leader of a peasant uprising that would overthrow the Ming Dynasty, led his army against Ming General Wu Sangui, who was stationed at Shanhaiguan. In 1900, the Eight-Nation Alliance burned down the Old Dragon’s Head when they invaded Shanhaiguan. In the early 1920s, a fierce war between Hebei warlords and Northeast China armies broke out near Shanhaiguan. During the Japanese invasion, Chinese soldiers resisted the aggressors by taking advantage of the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan.

The area’s long history has left numerous historical relics for today’s visitors. Though Shanhaiguan’s days as a defensive stronghold are over, its symbolic aura remains as a reminder of the transition from destruction to construction and from war to peace.

Considered a masterpiece amongst ancient Chinese military forts, Shanhaiguan was one of the first sections of the Great Wall to enjoy special protection. Thanks to government efforts on all levels, the 600-year-old fortress is as alive today as ever. In 2003, Shanhaiguan became one of the first sites to be included in the National Protection Program of the Great Wall. The program earmarked over a billion and a half yuan for the protection and renovation of the Ancient City of Shanhaiguan within five years and 200 million yuan to renovate the Shanhaiguan section of the Great Wall over two years. The 8 million bricks used to renovate the ancient Wall were ordered specially from a dozen different traditional brick produc-



When darkness falls, the ancient city of Shanhaiguan lights up.



Maintaining the Great Wall.



An ancient path survives the test of time.



Old gate piers.

The easternmost section of the Great Wall, known as Old Dragon’s Head, slips into the ocean.





*The ancient city of
Shanhaiguan at night.*



After school.

tion bases around the country. Additionally, all the materials and techniques used in the renovation were identical to the originals. Builders endeavored to preserve the structures' past magnificence with as much authenticity as possible everywhere, including the 6,000 meters of the ancient city wall, as well as traditional private residences and more than 100 quadrangles that date back to the Ming and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

From atop the lofty Bell and Drum Tower, one can still recognize the original grid-shaped layout of the historic city. Thanks partly to the efforts of the local government, the ancient city has regained its vibrance with strong Ming and Qing architectural styles. Four of the city's primary boulevards, lined with ancient archways and structures, intersect one another – the Century-Old Chinese Street in the east, Culture and Art Street in the west, Specialized Commercial Street in the south, and Bar Theme Street in the north. The four contrasting streets combine tradition and chic while injecting prosperity and modernity into the ancient city.

In addition to the protection of its surviving cultural relics and ancient architecture that attest to the city's visual beauty, Shanhaiguan has also taken measures to protect its pieces of intangible heritage, which represent the city's soul. This principle has been persistently followed in urban construction and protection, and its effectiveness is manifest in Shanhaiguan, which has become a model combination of the past and present. 



Dancing beside the city tower.



Newlyweds ring the bell to pray for blessing.

Once Upon a Time in Guangzhou

Text and photographs by Lin Dihuan

*The historic street has
witnessed countless
stories of ordinary lives
— some with a happy
ending, some more tragic.*

For a long time, Beijing has served not only as the capital, but also the political, economic and cultural center of China. Other cities have their own roles in the nation: Tianjin is a shelter guarding the capital; Wuhan is a town of great strategic importance; and Shanghai is a trade port. The city of Guangzhou, in southern China's Guangdong Province, is a complex commercial hub heavily influenced by Hong Kong. Its unique culture can perhaps best be analyzed by studying one of its most significant streets: Yide Road.

Past Ups and Downs

Yide Road runs east-west through the heart of Guangzhou, and its recent history stretches back to the time of the *Shisanhang*, literally "Thirteen Companies," during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

During the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing dynasties, Guangzhou became an important port open to foreign merchants. But foreign businessmen were not allowed to conduct trade with anyone other than the special government-backed brokerage companies, collectively known as the "Shisanhang."

Shisanhang were officially established in the Xiguan district in 1686, an area which now comprises Guangzhou Culture Park and Haizhu South Road. The trading companies reached their zenith during the reigns of Emperors Qianlong and Jiaqing, increasing in number to become a conglomerate of dozens of companies. The most famous firms were Tongwenhang, Guanglihang, Yihehang, and Yichenghang, which were founded by Guangzhou's four wealthiest merchants – Pan Qiguan, Lu Guanhang, Wu Bingjian, and Ye Shanglin. The Xiguan area, where the Shisanhang were located, bustled with trading ships, shoppers, and piles of silk, tea and porcelain ready for export. Merchants from dozens of countries including Britain, France, Holland, and various South Asian nations came to do business, from which the Shisanhang earned an incredible amount of wealth. The Xiguan area thus became the most important foreign trade hub of the Qing Dynasty.

In 1840, the First Opium War broke out. Suffering heavy defeats, the Qing court was forced to sign the *Treaty of Nanjing*, which abolished the monopoly of the Shisanhang on foreign trade. In 1856, during the Second Opium War, Guangzhou people, irritated by foreign invasion, burned down some mansions inhabited by foreign merchants. The Shisanhang were also destroyed in the fire. It is said the fire lasted a whole two days, and that silver coin reserves housed in the Shisanhang melted and flowed along the north bank of the Pearl River.

Today, in Xiguan there remains a narrow street named after the Shisanhang, though much else has changed. Over hundreds of years, the watercourse of the Pearl River kept moving southwards, and the street where the Shisanhang were located gradually lost its favorable location on the riverfront, resulting in its decline. But nearby Yide Road, which once served as the warehouse quarter for the Shisanhang, rose to become one of the most famous commercial streets in Guangzhou.

A Historic Street

An old photo reveals that back to the late Qing Dynasty, the wide, neat Yide Road was lined with European-style buildings, and crowded with peddlers, rickshaws, and pedestrians wearing traditional Chinese clothes.

The historic street still preserves many old structures, of which the most magnificent is the Sacred Heart Cathedral. It is known as the largest example of Gothic architecture in China, as well as the nation's only Gothic cathedral primarily made of granite – hence its nickname "Stone House." The cathedral was built by French Catholics, and modeled after Notre Dame in Paris. Its foundations were laid in 1863, but construction was not completed until 1888. "Jerusalem 1863" was engraved on the east cornerstone and "Rome 1863" on the west one, seeking to illustrate that the Roman Catholic Church had its origins in Jerusalem in the east and evolved in Rome in the west.



The Sacred Heart Cathedral has witnessed countless people who come to Guangzhou to pursue their dream of becoming rich.



Merchants are busy doing business in Yide Road.



A young woman sitting on a handcart, waiting for someone to unload the goods.

Exhausted after a day's hard work, a salesgirl yawns in a local gift shop.



In Yide Road, merchants commonly use handcarts to transport goods.



Rickshaw men waiting for business.



From each city, one kilogram of soil was taken to be combined and laid under the two foundation stones.

The actual construction of the cathedral turned out to be very challenging, mostly due to a lack of machinery. The granite stones were quarried in Hong Kong, and then shipped to Guangzhou, where they were polished and manually put into place. In total, the project cost 400,000 francs and took 25 years.

With a total floor space of 2,754 square meters, the cathedral extends 35 meters from east to west, 78.69 meters from north to south, and measures 58.5 meters in height. The Gothic structure is topped with a pair of towers. The east one serves as a clock tower, and the west as a bell tower, in which there are four gigantic bronze bells shipped from France. It is said that the gigantic clock and bronze bells were already installed prior to the completion of the towers, so that these expensive items could not be stolen through the narrow gates.

Today, the cathedral is still an important meeting place for Catholics in Guangzhou. It lies near a bustling commercial street, and is often visited by Western merchants, attesting to a long history in Guangzhou of religion and commerce existing side-by-side.

Along Yide Road are countless family-run stores. Typically, each has a business area of no more than four square meters, and bulk transactions are done in the warehouse in the rear. Despite their limited space, these stores earn considerable income. Industry insiders reveal that the annual turnover for the whole of Yide Road may reach 1 billion yuan.

The road alone makes up 70 percent of Guangzhou's seafood and dried foods wholesale market. The month before the Chinese New Year usually accounts for 30 percent of annual sales. Along Yide Road, customers may find all kinds of groceries from every corner of China, ranging from expensive seafood like shark's fin and abalone to ten-cent commodities like lotus seeds, dried lily flowers, and vermicelli made from bean starch. Locals proudly declare that shoppers can find any produce imaginable on Yide Road. And due to fierce market competition, goods are often sold much cheaper than elsewhere. Some shoppers even travel from Hong Kong to buy seafood and dried foods.

Yide Road remains little changed from days of old, with the historic buildings on both sides acting as a reminder of a storied past. The biggest difference is that the items on sale are no longer silk, tea and porcelain, but modern electric toys, gifts, stationery, and seafood. 



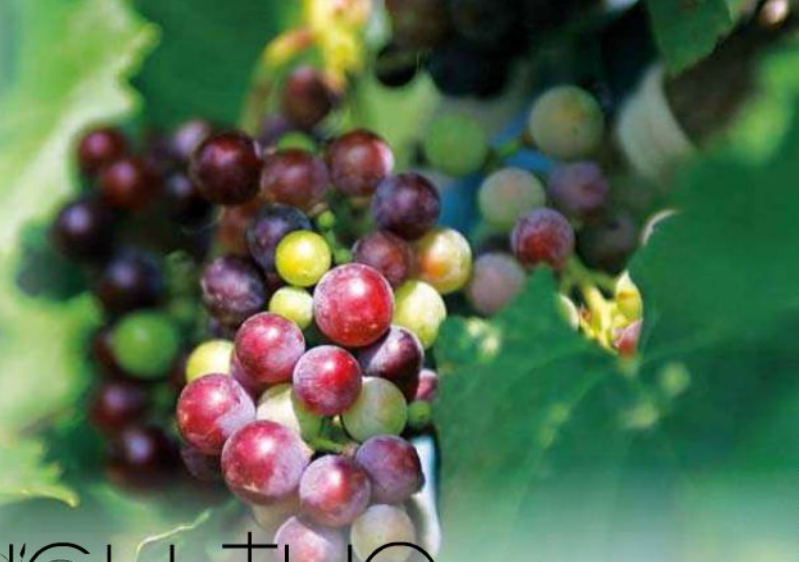
The Sacred Heart Cathedral receives many foreign visitors, most of whom are merchants from Africa, South America, and Southeast Asia.



Shangxiajiu, one of Guangzhou's busiest commercial pedestrian streets near Yide Road.

A peddler selling "flying olive," a traditional snack in Guangzhou. Its name derives from a legendary tradition: Local peddlers threw olives to buyers who were reluctant to go downstairs through the windows of their house. The buyers then threw money down to the peddlers.





THROUGH THE Grapevine

Text by Tan Xingyu

Chinese people have enjoyed potent spirits for ages, and this fondness has enabled the development of a sophisticated drinking culture. In the modern era, however, grape wine has become in vogue across the country, with some amount of status attached to knowledge and consumption of certain varieties. Some of the most famous foreign vintages are sold in China at exorbitant prices. For example, a bottle of 1982 Lafite can fetch up to 50,000 yuan. Although knowledge of French wine may garner status, many remain unaware that fermenting of grapes actually has a long history in China.

Within any specific region, variations in grape planting and brewing, combined with different geographies, will produce a plethora of distinctive tastes along with many interesting stories – which is surely a major factor in wine's profound global cultural position. Specific ar-

omas can only be produced within certain climate and soil conditions, making an ideal vineyard environment attractive to potential brewers from near and far. China already has several grape plantation bases, each with rich legends surrounding the fermented fruit.

Xinjiang: Wine of a Millennium

The remains of the 2,000-year-old city of Niva can be found west of the ruins of ancient Loulan Kingdom and north of Minfeng County in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The ruins were discovered by archaeologists in the early 20th century along with numerous cultural relics. Amongst the items unearthed from tombs in the Niva ruins were bright-colored silk and cotton textiles, and surprisingly, remnants of grape wine. According to records inscribed on accompanying wooden slips, during Niva's heydays, the area had mature brewing techniques, and wine was a luxury enjoyed by the upper class. The size of a man's vineyard was a primary criterion for defining his status for marriage proposals.

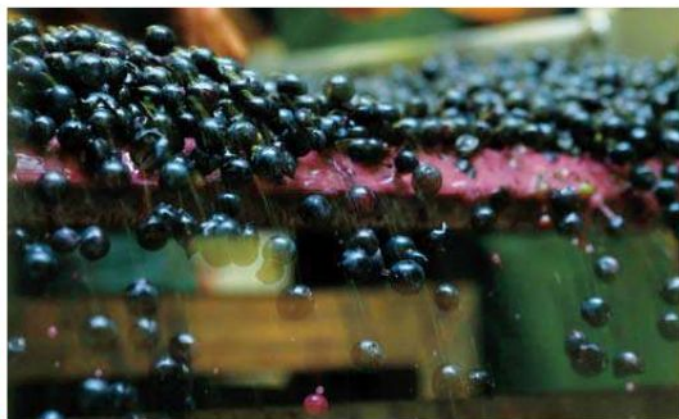
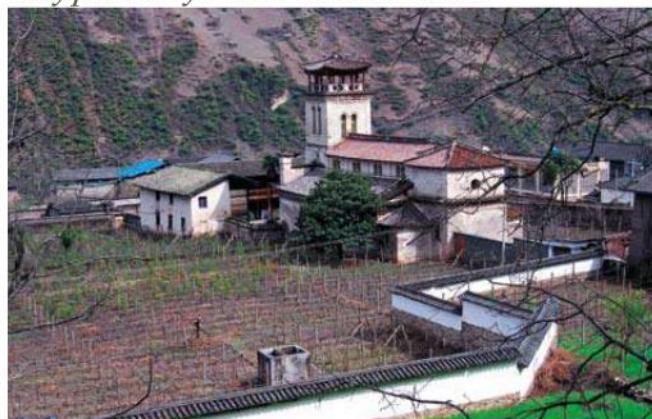


Indeed, Xinjiang is home to the earliest grapevines in what is now China. Historical documents show that in 138 B.C., the emperor of the Western Han Dynasty sent Zhang Qian on a diplomatic mission to Xiyu (present-day Xinjiang and some areas of Central Asia). When Zhang returned to the capital, Chang'an (now Xi'an), he brought along many exotic products, including grape seeds. During the Tang (618-907) and the Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties, Xinjiang's grape wine was introduced to the Central Plains along the Silk Road. Countless poets began praising the beverage in verse after becoming intoxicated by its remarkable flavor and properties. Today, Xinjiang's Turpan Basin is one of the leading grape producers in China.

Xinjiang is blessed with abundant sunshine, pure wa-

ter melted from the snowcapped Tianshan Mountains, soil rich in potassium and calcium, and wide variations in daily temperature – all of which contribute to optimum grape cultivation. In summer here, hot temperatures and sparse rainfall curtail the development of plant disease and insects, and in the cold, dry winter, few pests can survive. Because of the infrequency of pests, growers have little need for pesticides, ensuring that Xinjiang grapes are high quality, and result in superb wines. In her book, *The World Atlas of Wine*, global wine authority Jancis Robinson notes that the vineyards in the Tianshan Mountains are located at precisely the same latitude as world-famous vineyards such as Bordeaux in France and Napa Valley in California, which enables it to produce comparably exquisite wine.

The grapevines in the backyard of Cizhong Cathedral in Yunnan were originally planted by French missionaries. IC



Many places in China produce grapes of superb quality which are suitable for making wine. CFP



Squeezing out the juice, the first step in making wine. CFP

Mile: Legend of Rose Honey

Many wine experts have been astonished that Mile, a county in the Lancang River Valley, is capable of producing extraordinarily high-quality wine. The region is near the tropical zone, far from the “golden belt” for grape production (between 35 and 45 degrees north latitude), and no historical records suggest it had any tradition of wine-making. Wine aficionados had little faith that anything worthwhile could be produced there, so when “Yunnan Red” first hit the market in 1997, its sales were sluggish. Over time, the new brand began attracting a following for its sweetness, which contrasts with most conventional red wine favored by Chinese consumers.

Although relatively young, Yunnan’s history of grape wine production can be traced back 200 years when a French missionary departed from India and journeyed all the way to Yunnan via the Ancient Tea Horse Trail. At Cizhong, in the Lancang River Valley, the missionary was granted a patch of land to construct a church, which eventually became the Cathedral of the Yunnan deanery of Missions Etrangères de Paris (M.E.P.) in 1921. The church served as home to many French clergy until the last one left in 1951.

Yunnan is a world away from France, so missionaries were easily afflicted by nostalgia. The Lancang River Valley features a dry and hot climate with wide daily temperature variances, and the mountainous terrain ensures perpetual favorable spring weather in the valley. Its singularly ideal climate enables grapes to grow well above 1,500 meters in altitude, rarely seen elsewhere in the world. So the Frenchmen planted grapevines brought from their home country and made barrels for fermenting wine. Their techniques have been handed down to locals in Cizhong, and today nearly every household is skilled in wine brewing.

When the manufacturer of Yunnan Red invited a sommelier from France in 1997 to help improve the wine’s quality, the visitor was surprised to find that the type of grape growing across Yunnan was a high-grade variety

that was already extinct in France: Rose Honey. In 1866, because of an epidemic of pests brought from America with imported timber, vineyards throughout France were stricken by grape phylloxera, which resulted in the extinction of Rose Honey. Fortunately, the variety was introduced to Yunnan prior to the disaster. The wine brewed from this grape is imbued with slight rose fragrance, and according to the sommelier, it can grant the drinker the illusion that a beautiful girl is shyly approaching.

Yantai: Cradle of Modern Chinese Wine

Yantai, a coastal city in China’s eastern Shandong Province has been dubbed the modern cradle of Chinese wine, in part due to a historical anecdote. On a summer evening in 1871, Zhang Bishi, a successful Chinese businessman then living in Indonesia, attended a cocktail party hosted by the French consul in Jakarta. During the party, someone related the story that when Anglo-French Allied Army soldiers occupied Yantai in 1860, they found wild grapes covering the mountains. The soldiers harvested some grapes and brewed a wine, which they claimed was so tasty that they even considered remaining there after the war to start a winery.

After hearing this tale, Zhang, a savvy businessman, imagined business opportunities, and upon returning to China, he conducted an investigational tour of Yantai. Situated along the northern coast of the Shandong Peninsula, at the same latitude as Bordeaux and Sicily, Yantai faces the ocean and is protected by mountains. It features a continental monsoon climate typical to warm temperate zones, characterized by abundant rainfall and plentiful sunlight, which provides favorable conditions for growing grapes. In 1892, Zhang invested considerable money to purchase two barren Yantai mountains, hire 2,000 workers, construct a brewery, and open a vineyard of 80 hectares. This marked the beginning of today’s Changyu Wine Group, China’s oldest modern wine brewing enterprise. After more than a century of expansion, the Yantai brewery now includes over 10,000 hectares

The Chateau Changyu AFIP Global, designed in the style of a European castle, has become something of a tourist attraction in suburban Beijing.



of grapevines that produce several wine varieties such as Cabernet Gernishet, Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Chardonnay.

In recent years, Changyu developed its own chateau wine. The Chateau Changyu AFIP Global in Beijing's Miyun District features more than 30 European-style building complexes including the country's first super-five-star-rated wine-themed hotel and presidential villas. All of the buildings in the area are designed to resemble typical European castles, both inside and out, including curtains, stairway handrails, and furnishings.

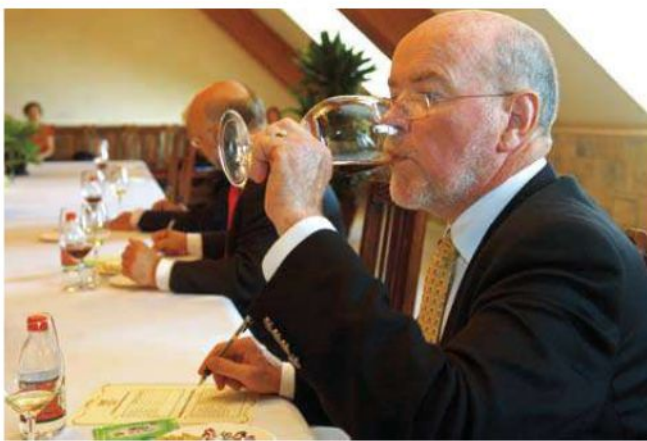
Because of the general lack of knowledge of chateau wine amongst the majority of the Chinese population, Changyu AFIP Global developed three innovative functions in addition to its winemaking to help spread wine culture: theme tourism, wine-tasting training, and leisure holidays. At Chateau Changyu, visitors can pay 100 yuan admission for a guided tour through Changyu Wine Museum, the brewing workshop, and the underground cellar.

At the DIY Workshop, tourists can learn about crafting oak casks and bottle corking, or even brew wine themselves with a customized label that can be personalized with photos. "Such personal experiences can help enhance visitors' understanding of wine culture," explains Manager Liu of Chateau Changyu.

Businesses such as Chateau Changyu have earned considerable attention from the domestic market. Vinexpo Asia statistics show that the annual growth of Chinese wine consumption was around 7 percent between 2002 and 2006, and rose to 13 percent after 2006. Ma Lin, a senior wine industry expert in charge of CAFA Formations Sommelier School China Office, adds that although the Chinese red wine market has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years, there is still a glaring lack of indigenous Chinese products and consumption habits.

"The Chinese wine industry is new," continues Ma, "like a child compared to mature wine-producing countries like France. But I believe this child has an abundance of potential." 

A vineyard of the Chateau Changyu AFIP Global.



A French sommelier samples Changyu wine.

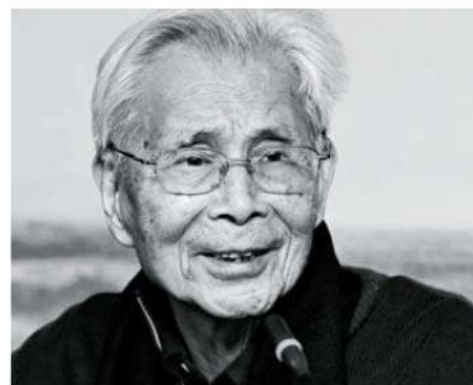


A scene representing wine production at Changyu Wine Museum.

Wine, both imported and domestic, enjoys increasing popularity in China.



China's Most Valued Artist Passes



Text by Kou Yu

Photographs courtesy of National Art Museum of China

Who is the greatest artist of modern China?

Such a question is impossible to answer,
given the subjectivity of art as a whole.

However, naming the
most financially successful artist
is a much more objective task, leaving little
room for debate.



Wu Guanzhong's work features a strong Chinese flavor. Residence on Water is one of his greatest pieces.

The 2010 Hurun Art List, published in March 2010, names China's top 50 living artists who earned the highest totals at public auctions during 2009. Zhao Wuji, then 89, was ranked first with an annual total of 240 million yuan, followed close behind by 91-year-old Wu Guanzhong, whose work earned 220 million yuan that year. Of Wu's works, *Water Buffalo Under the Willows* (1995) sold for 14.56 million yuan to become the most expensive traditional Chinese painting of 2009.

It was no surprise that Wu's death, on June 25, 2010, prompted widespread mourning in art circles. From July 7 to August 2, an exhibition honoring the painting master attracted over 10,000 university students to visit the National Art Museum of China. According to the museum's curator, Fan Di'an, the exhibition was the ideal commemoration to help more people understand the man and his work. Additionally, three seminars were held to discuss Wu's artistic achievements.

Born in 1919, Wu went to France in 1947 to study Western art history at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Paris. During his three years there, he gained a deep insight into Western art, especially the more modern work. In a memoir Wu penned in his later years, he described his fondness for Van Gogh: "When I began to learn painting as a child, I had already fallen in love with Van Gogh's work. That love has never diminished to this day."

Van Gogh once said to his brother, "Perhaps you will argue that there are also flowers in Paris, so you can blossom there, but you're wheat that should be sowed in the fields of your hometown, where you can take root and grow." Inspired by these words, Wu returned to China in the autumn of 1950 to teach at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the Architecture Department of Tsinghua University, and other prestigious institutions. Gradually, he emerged as one of China's most renowned painters of the twentieth century.

Wu devoted his life to combining Chinese ink painting with Western oil painting, which resulted in an injection of eternal vitality into all of his art. Typically, Chinese ink painting features brush and ink as its primary tools, and images are rendered in white and black. But Wu explored a more colorful world in his lifelong practice of traditional Chinese painting. With skillful use of black and white, his work usually inspires transcendent interpretations. Meanwhile, the style of his work wanders down the path connecting realism to the semi-abstract. For a long time, Wu had been continually exploring the languages and aesthetics of both Eastern and Western art while practicing the concepts of "introducing ethnic elements into oil painting" and "modernizing traditional Chinese painting," to develop his own unparalleled artistic style. Since the 1980s, his artistic conceptions have drawn worldwide attention, and played an active role in the evolution of modern Chinese painting theory.

Perhaps the most expensive art is not always the greatest, but market popularity certainly reflects a piece's degree of acceptance amongst the public. In recent years,



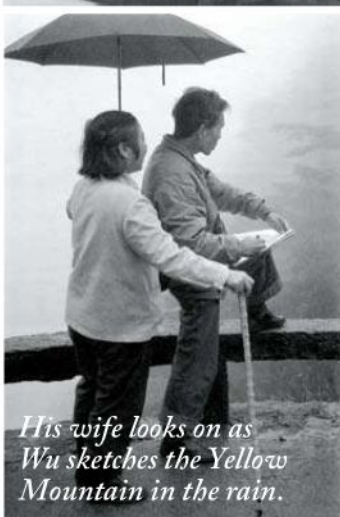
Wu Guanzhong at primary school age.



Wu Guanzhong in Paris, 1948.



March 1989: Wu Guanzhong sketches nature in Montmartre, Paris.



His wife looks on as Wu sketches the Yellow Mountain in the rain.



Wu Guanzhong paints in his hometown.

Flying Cross the
Ordination Ter-
race (2008), oil
painting on canvas,
60×76cm.



several of Wu's works sold for 10 million yuan each at public auctions. Since 2000, 1,417 pieces of his have been sold, for a total value of 1.78 billion yuan. Once, a piece which Wu insisted was a counterfeit still sold for 2.3 million yuan. However, Wu himself paid little attention to how much his work fetched in the public market.

Two major factors attested to Wu's respectable virtues as a great artist: he donated many of his best works to art galleries and museums in China and abroad, and burned

much of his work that he considered less than perfect.

In recent years, he donated nearly 200 pieces to the National Art Museum of China, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Shanghai Art Museum, and Singapore Art Museum. His behavior astonished many art brokers who saw him throwing away large sums of money. Wu saw his pieces as cherished "daughters," and considered his action like finding them ideal husbands. He was even quoted saying, "My daughters are married to different places, such as the National Art Museum of China, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Shanghai Art Museum, and Lu Xun Museum. I hope my work can be seen by people from everywhere in the world and play an active role in promoting mutual understanding between contrasting cultures."

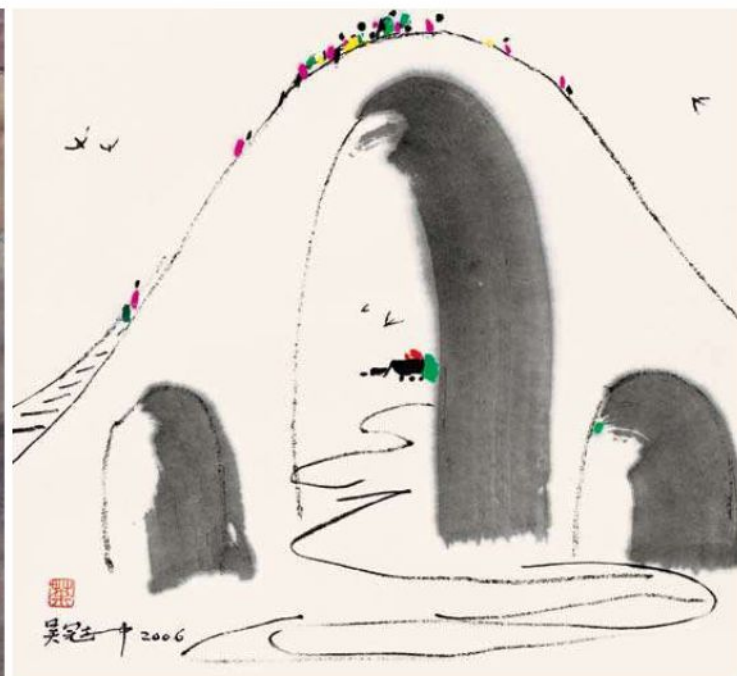
In the 1950s, Wu created a series of paintings depicting Jinggang Mountain. Later, after reviewing them, he found none satisfying and burned them all. In 1966, he burned hundreds of his pieces that he created after returning to China. In September 1991, he burned hundreds more that failed to give him satisfaction. At the time, he was already a world-renowned painter, and each of his pieces was considered priceless. But Wu was unwavering in his refusal to let any of his substandard work survive.

Although his work fetched fortunes, Wu insisted on leading a simple life. He lived in a small apartment, and his work studio was tiny, with an area of less than 15 square meters. He sought little of the material life, but everything in the practice of art. Those who knew him assert that Wu valued his art more than his life.

His last words for his family read, "If you miss me, you can go see me in my art." 

Flower and
Flower (2008), oil
painting on canvas,
60×76cm.





Tang-Dynasty
Sculptures in
Foguang Temple
on Mt. Wutai
(1954), water
color, 43×38cm.

High Bridge (2007), colored
ink painting, 45×48cm.



The Night of Me-
tropolis (1997),
colored ink and
wash painting,
145×368cm.



Spring Snow
on Mt. Bashan
(1983), colored ink
and wash painting,
69×137cm.



Home Games of Asia

*Text by Chen Biao
Photographs by Duan Wei*

Dong Aili could almost taste the glory of victory as her dragon boat closed in on the finish line. Her team, Jiujiang Women's Dragon Boat Team, was just one candidate selected to compete for the honor of representing China in dragon boat racing at the upcoming Asian Games.

Organizers have been scouring the country for worthy competitors to form the national team since 2008, when dragon boat was added to the list of Guangzhou Asian Games events. "Of the 42 events of the Games, 28 are also in the Olympics and 14 are exclusively Asian," explains Xu Jianping, deputy director of the Sports Department of the Guangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee (GAGOC). "Dragon boat is one of the six new events, and it includes races at 250 meters, 500 meters, and 1,000 meters for both men and women."

Dragon boat racing is a traditional event most popular in South China. Historical records show that large-scale competitions were already common in Guangdong during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279).

"China's dragon boat racing has been famous throughout the world for ages," remarks Zou Jijun from the General Administration of Sports of China. Today, there are more than 300,000 teams scattered throughout the country, including 3,000 from Fuzhou in Fujian Province and 4,000 from Wenzhou in Zhejiang, which compete at the national level. "The event has enjoyed lasting popularity across the country because it is so closely related to a major Chinese festival [Dragon Boat Festival]," continues Zou. "And in recent years, its popularity has grown around the world."

However, according to Zou, the Chinese team has faced stiff competition from teams hailing from Europe, America, and Southeast Asia during international events. In order for China to prevail in this native sport, Zou believes that the team must gather the best talent from all corners of the country.

Mass Selection for the National Team

Dong Aili won't miss the chance to realize one of her greatest dreams. In 2008, she bested 200 other candidates to become a new member of the Jiujiang Women's Team.

It didn't take long for Dong to meld with the team after she found that most of the members were fishers or



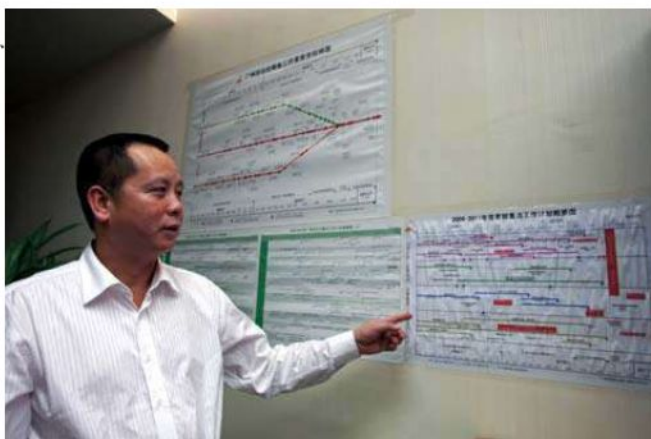


The cricket ground was built especially for the newly-added event. Cricket is most popular amongst British Commonwealth countries, such as India, Australia, New Zealand, and Bangladesh.

Dragon boat racing is very popular in Guangdong Province. courtesy of GAGOC



*Xu Jianping,
deputy director of
the Sports Depart-
ment, GAGOC.*



Guangdong Olympic Swimming and Diving Pool.

farmers before they became professional rowers. And she didn't expect that she, at 34, would be the youngest of the 24 team members. The average age on the team is 43, and the oldest member is 50.

The team has been victorious in eight international competitions out of nine since 2007, held in China's Jiangsu Province, Malaysia, Indonesia, and other places. Even the team's lone failure, a second-place finish at a 2008 competition in Indonesia, was not without controversy. Generally, for international dragon boat competitions water is at least three meters deep, but at that competition it was just over one meter, and the average weight of Indonesian team members was 15 kilos lighter than the Chinese rowers.

Dong Aili and her teammates prevailed during selective trials for the national team on February 18, 2009. "We've been working hard to win the selection," she as-

serts. "We spent most of our time training regardless of the weather, and on that boat we worked together with the strength of men."

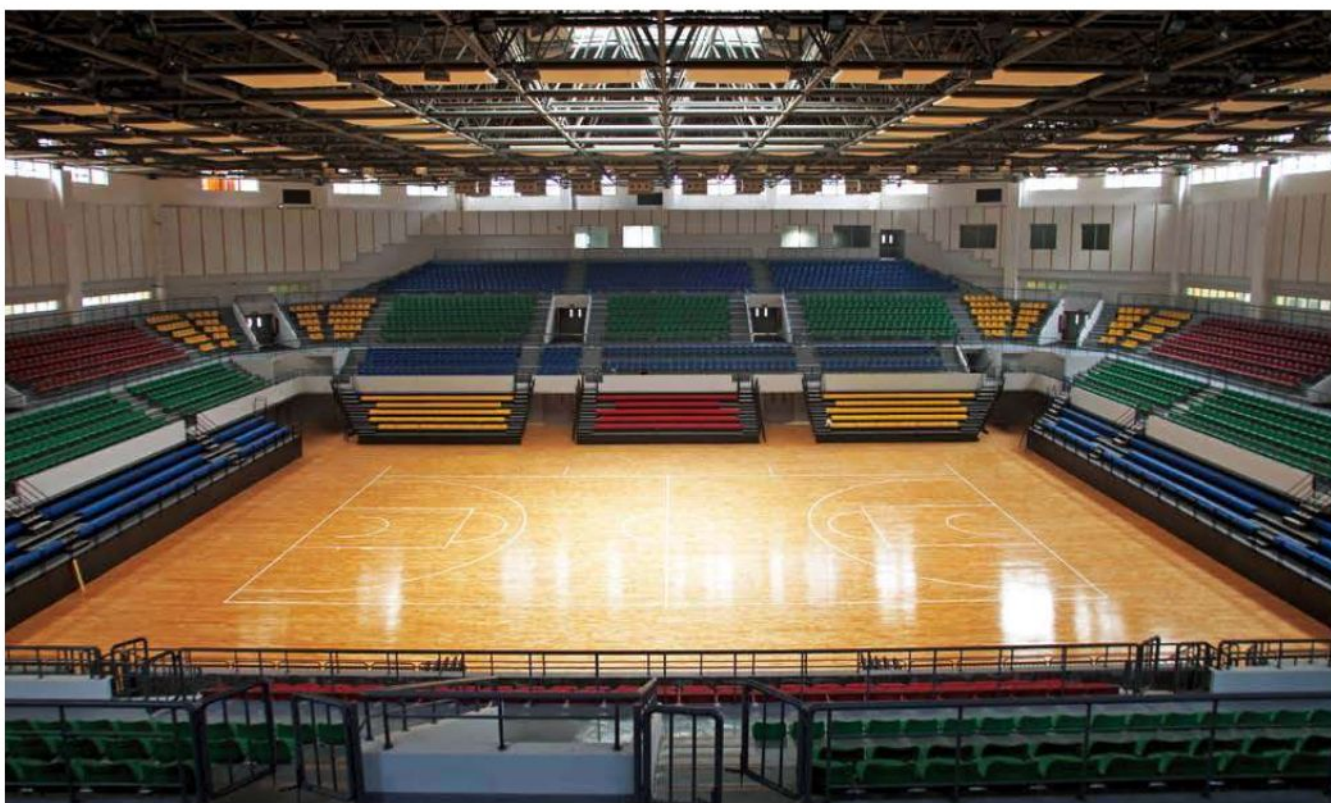
After the selective trials finished in April 2010, the finals were scheduled for five months later, with three remaining candidate teams in both men and women's divisions, including Dong's.

"The national team won't be finalized until September," remarks Zou. "Unlike most other competitive events, dragon boat racing requires more joint, coordinated efforts. It takes some time to optimize the best athletes and combine them into one."

Arrival of New Events

Along with the dragon boat, several other new events have been added to the Guangzhou Asian Games, such

*The newly-erected
gymnasium of the
Guangzhou Sports
University is ready
for competition.*



as sports dancing, inline skating, cricket, the game of Go, and Chinese chess.

"Games like sports dancing and inline skating have gained recent popularity among the general public," remarks Deputy Director Xu. "So we've made them official events at the Games. Others, such as dragon boat, Go, and Chinese chess, are traditional Chinese competitions. Dragon boat racing and Chinese chess are especially popular in the southern regions, so they are ideal representations of local flavor for the Games. Cricket has been added to highlight South Asia's multiculturalism at this grand, international event."

According to IOC president Jacques Rogge, the Guangzhou Asian Games will be an important milestone in the development of the world Olympic movement. Its 42 events eclipse total competitions of any previous Asian Games, and many unique games showcase Asian culture. The president believes that the Games will play an important role in preserving traditional Asian culture and as a platform for sponsoring great cultural exchanges.

New events also provide greater opportunities for female athletes. Women will compete for the first time in games such as kabaddi, water polo, cricket, inline skating, dragon boat racing, Go, Chinese chess, and boxing. Women's boxing has been one of the most anticipated events after it was formally enlisted in January 2010 by the Olympic Council of Asia and the GAGOC. 



Sports dancing is a combination of sports and art, which evolved from ballroom dancing. Its Asian Games introduction will include ten categories such as waltz, tango, quickstep, and Latin dance.

Inline skating, both recreational and competitive, is considered by some to be an ideal activity for youths to develop speed, strength, endurance, and agility.



Enjoy Bird's nest @ Rouge in Crowne Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun

Bird's nest is regarded as the nonesuch of Chinese cuisine at all times, and also because of its high nutrition making the temptation can not be resisted by a lot of diners.

Come to Rouge and pamper yourself with a wide selection of temping bird's nest dishes created by our Executive Chef He and his talent team to tantalize your taste bud.



For reservations, please call +86 10 5993 8888.

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In Beijing, pizza is all about the quality of the cheese, and our Valley Café doesn't skimp on their version of the mozzarella. This pie features four types of cheese separated on the pizza. The asiago is the best of the four; it really brings out the tangy tomato base. The scamolza, a kind of smoked cheese, is unique and almost meaty. Aside from the mozzarella, there's also the gorgonzola—a good and smooth choice for you. Pair up the delicious, Italian pizza with golden crunchy fries, domestic drinks, and indulge yourself.

For reservations, please call +86 10 5993 8888.



A Romantic Package Devoted to Love this Chinese Valentine's Day at Ritz-Carlton Beijing, Financial Street

To celebrate this Chinese festival on August 16, the Ritz-Carlton Beijing, Financial Street presents couples with two choices of packages offering a romantic stay that bears the quintessential hallmark of elegance and service.

Ultimate Devotion Suite Package (RMB 59,999 per night)
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Available from August 14 through 17, 2010.

All rates are subject to 15 percent service charge.

More details and reservations can be made by calling (86 10) 6629 6999.

Dim Sum Promotion in Guan Yuan Chinese Restaurant

Authentic Cantonese Dim Sum from RMB 8.00, subject to 15% surcharge.

RMB 78.00 net per person for unlimited selection during Saturdays & Sundays. (Restaurant dining only)

New Recommendation:

Steamed Prawn Dumpling with Vegetable, Steamed Minced Cattle Fish and Prawn, Baked Cappuccino Tart, Baked Cream Fruits Tart etc.

Opening Hours: Mon. to Fri.: 11:00am -- 2:30pm



Sat. & Sun.: 10:00am -- 3:00pm

Valid until August 31, 2010

Not applicable to any discount program or cash vouchers

Venue: Guan Yuan Chinese Restaurant, 2nd floor, Holiday Inn Beijing Downtown

Tel: 86-10-6833 8822 ext. 7224

Mrs. Shen Xue and Mr. Zhao Hongbo visit Intercontinental Beijing Financial Street

The famous figure skaters, Mrs. Shen Xue and Mr. Zhao Hongbo visited Intercontinental Beijing Financial Street on 25 June. Mr. Wei – representative of hotel owner and Mr. Rice - General Manager of hotel warmly welcomed the famous couple.



New Al Fresco Dining – Sunset Lounge @ Swissotel Beijing

Sunset Lounge is a unique outdoor location, features an alfresco dining overlooking beautiful sunsets, serving sizzling juicy burgers, ice cold beers, refreshing cocktails with live band entertainment and much more. Sunset Lounge will be opened from 5pm till midnight daily as from June 9th to September 30th, 2010.

Private party or corporate event can be held at Sunset Lounge. Tailor made decoration and menu are available.



For more information and reservation: 010-6553 2288 ext. 2127

Legendale Hotel Beijing Summer Sizzling Hot Deals

Celebrate this summer with our irresistible "Sizzling Hot Deals". Legendale Hotel Beijing will present a generous selection of privilege room promotions, incredibly priced between RMB1,600.00 to RMB2,200nett during the months of July and August 2010.

Room Bookings:

For reservations, you can either book through HRC or any travel agency. For your immediate needs and priority bookings, please contact the Hotel directly by calling: (86 10) 8511 3388 ext. 8301 or email to: sm@legendalehotel.com.cn.



Pink drinks and barbecue at Aria Terrace in China World Hotel, Beijing

Aria offers a mouth of wonderful "chillaxing" Thursday evenings on its elegant outdoor terrace. All drinks pick, from rose moet, rose wine and sangria meet platters of meat barbecued to tender, pink perfection.

For reservations, please contact F&B reservation office at (010)6505 5838



Champagne cocktails at the Lobby Lounge in China World Hotel, Beijing

A mouth of delicious champagne cocktails that are perfect for all situations from lounging casually or for that long deserved night out with friends. Champagne cocktails served at Lobby Lounge this August include

Fresh Mango Bellini, Rose Petal Royal and Lemon Orange Mimosa.



For reservations, please contact F&B reservation office at (010)6505 5838



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